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TALES FROM

BLACKWOOD

A. H. Hamilton.

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FROM

"BLACKWOOD"

New Series

VOL. II.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON

CONTENTS OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

THE BATTLE OF DORKING.

LATE FOR THE TRAIN.

THE CONGRESS AND THE AGAPEDOME.

MAGA'S BIRTHDAY.

GRACE OWEN'S ENGAGEMENT.

THE RAID OF ARNABOLL.

HOW TO MAKE A PEDIGREE.

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TALES FROM "BLACKWOOD."

THE BATTLE OF DORKING.

REMINISCENCES OF A VOLUNTEER.

[*MAGA*. May 1871.]

YOU ask me to tell you, my grandchildren, something about my own share in the great events that happened fifty years ago. 'Tis sad work turning back to that bitter page in our history, but you may perhaps take profit in your new homes from the lesson it teaches. For us in England it came too late. And yet we had plenty of warnings, if we had only made use of them. The danger did not come on us unawares. It burst on us suddenly, 'tis true; but its coming was foreshadowed plainly enough to open our eyes, if we had not been wilfully blind. We English have only ourselves to blame for the humiliation which has been brought on the land. Venerable old age! Dishonourable

old age, I say, when it follows a manhood dishonoured as ours has been. I declare, even now, though fifty years have passed, I can hardly look a young man in the face when I think I am one of those in whose youth happened this degradation of Old England — one of those who betrayed the trust handed down to us unstained by our forefathers.

What a proud and happy country was this fifty years ago! Free-trade had been working for more than a quarter of a century, and there seemed to be no end to the riches it was bringing us. London was growing bigger and bigger; you could not build houses fast enough for the rich people who wanted to live in them, the merchants who made the money and came from all parts of the world to settle there, and the lawyers and doctors and engineers and others, and tradespeople who got their share out of the profits. The streets reached down to Croydon and Wimbledon, which my father could remember quite country places; and people used to say that Kingston and Reigate would soon be joined to London. We thought we could go on building and multiplying for ever. 'Tis true that even then there was no lack of poverty; the people who had no money went on increasing as fast as the rich, and pauperism was already beginning to be a difficulty; but if the rates were high, there was plenty of money to pay them with; and as for what were called the middle classes, there really

seemed no limit to their increase and prosperity. People in those days thought it quite a matter of course to bring a dozen of children into the world —or, as it used to be said, Providence sent them that number of babies; and if they couldn't always marry off all the daughters, they used to manage to provide for the sons, for there were new openings to be found in all the professions, or in the Government offices, which went on steadily getting larger. Besides, in those days young men could be sent out to India, or into the army or navy; and even then emigration was not uncommon, although not the regular custom it is now. Schoolmasters, like all other professional classes, drove a capital trade. They did not teach very much, to be sure, but new schools with their four or five hundred boys were springing up all over the country.

Fools that we were! We thought that all this wealth and prosperity were sent us by Providence, and could not stop coming. In our blindness we did not see that we were merely a big workshop, making up the things which came from all parts of the world; and that if other nations stopped sending us raw goods to work up, we could not produce them ourselves. True, we had in those days an advantage in our cheap coal and iron; and had we taken care not to waste the fuel, it might have lasted us longer. But even then there were signs that coal and iron would soon become cheaper in

foreign parts; while as to food and other things, England was not better off than it is now. We were so rich simply because other nations from all parts of the world were in the habit of sending their goods to us to be sold or manufactured; and we thought that this would last for ever. And so, perhaps, it might have lasted, if we had only taken proper means to keep it; but, in our folly, we were too careless even to insure our prosperity, and after the course of trade was turned away it would not come back again.

And yet, if ever a nation had a plain warning, we had. If we were the greatest trading country, our neighbours were the leading military power in Europe. They were driving a good trade, too, for this was before their foolish communism (about which you will hear when you are older) had ruined the rich without benefiting the poor, and they were in many respects the first nation in Europe; but it was on their army that they prided themselves most. And with reason. They had beaten the Russians and the Austrians, and the Prussians too, in bygone years, and they thought they were invincible. Well do I remember the great review held at Paris by the Emperor Napoleon during the great Exhibition, and how proud he looked showing off his splendid Guards to the assembled kings and princes. Yet three years afterwards, the force so long deemed the first in

Europe was ignominiously beaten, and the whole army taken prisoners. Such a defeat had never happened before in the world's history; and with this proof before us of the folly of disbelieving in the possibility of disaster merely because it had never fallen upon us, it might have been supposed that we should have the sense to take the lesson to heart. And the country was certainly roused for a time, and a cry was raised that the army ought to be reorganised, and our defences strengthened against the enormous power for sudden attacks which it was seen other nations were able to put forth. And a scheme of army reform was brought forward by the Government. It was a half-and-half affair at best; and, unfortunately, instead of being taken up in Parliament as a national scheme, it was made a party matter of, and so fell through. There was a Radical section of the House, too, whose votes had to be secured by conciliation, and which blindly demanded a reduction of armaments as the price of allegiance. This party always decried military establishments as part of a fixed policy for reducing the influence of the Crown and the aristocracy. They could not understand that the times had altogether changed, that the Crown had really no power, and that the Government merely existed at the pleasure of the House of Commons, and that even Parliament-rule was beginning to give way to mob-law. At any rate, the

Ministry, baffled on all sides, gave up by degrees all the strong points of a scheme which they were not heartily in earnest about. It was not that there was any lack of money, if only it had been spent in the right way. The army cost enough, and more than enough, to give us a proper defence, and there were armed men of sorts in plenty and to spare, if only they had been decently organised. It was in organisation and forethought that we fell short, because our rulers did not heartily believe in the need for preparation. The fleet and the Channel, they said, were sufficient protection. So army reform was put off to some more convenient season, and the militia and volunteers were left untrained as before, because to call them out for drill would "interfere with the industry of the country." We could have given up some of the industry of those days, forsooth, and yet be busier than we are now. But why tell you a tale you have so often heard already? The nation, although uneasy, was misled by the false security its leaders professed to feel; the warning given by the disasters that overtook France was allowed to pass by unheeded. We would not even be at the trouble of putting our arsenals in a safe place, or of guarding the capital against a surprise, although the cost of doing so would not have been so much as missed from the national wealth. The French trusted in their army and its great reputation, we in our fleet; and in

each case the result of this blind confidence was disaster, such as our forefathers in their hardest struggles could not have even imagined.

I need hardly tell you how the crash came about. First, the rising in India drew away a part of our small army; then came the difficulty with America, which had been threatening for years, and we sent off ten thousand men to defend Canada—a handful which did not go far to strengthen the real defences of that country, but formed an irresistible temptation to the Americans to try and take them prisoners, especially as the contingent included three battalions of the Guards. Thus the regular army at home was even smaller than usual, and nearly half of it was in Ireland to check the talked-of Fenian invasion fitting out in the West. Worse still—though I do not know it would really have mattered as things turned out—the fleet was scattered abroad: some ships to guard the West Indies, others to check privateering in the China seas, and a large part to try and protect our colonies on the Northern Pacific shore of America, where, with incredible folly, we continued to retain possessions which we could not possibly defend. America was not the great power forty years ago that it is now; but for us to try and hold territory on her shores which could only be reached by sailing round the Horn, was as absurd as if she had attempted to take the Isle of Man before the independence of Ireland.

We see this plainly enough now, but we were all blind then.

It was while we were in this state, with our ships all over the world, and our little bit of an army cut up into detachments, that the Secret Treaty was published, and Holland and Denmark were annexed. People say now that we might have escaped the troubles which came on us if we had at any rate kept quiet till our other difficulties were settled; but the English were always an impulsive lot: the whole country was boiling over with indignation, and the Government, egged on by the press, and going with the stream, declared war. We had always got out of scrapes before, and we believed our old luck and pluck would somehow pull us through.

Then, of course, there was bustle and hurry all over the land. Not that the calling up of the army reserves caused much stir, for I think there were only about 5000 altogether, and a good many of these were not to be found when the time came; but recruiting was going on all over the country, with a tremendous high bounty, 50,000 more men having been voted for the army. Then there was a Ballot Bill passed for adding 55,500 men to the militia; why a round number was not fixed on I don't know, but the Prime Minister said that this was the exact quota wanted to put the defences of the country on a sound footing. Then the ship-

building that began! Ironclads, despatch-boats, gunboats, monitors,—every building-yard in the country got its job, and they were offering ten shillings a-day wages for anybody who could drive a rivet. This didn't improve the recruiting, you may suppose. I remember, too, there was a squabble in the House of Commons about whether artisans should be drawn for the ballot, as they were so much wanted, and I think they got an exemption. This sent numbers to the yards; and if we had had a couple of years to prepare instead of a couple of weeks, I daresay we should have done very well.

It was on a Monday that the declaration of war was announced, and in a few hours we got our first inkling of the sort of preparation the enemy had made for the event which they had really brought about, although the actual declaration was made by us. A pious appeal to the God of battles, whom it was said we had aroused, was telegraphed back; and from that moment all communication with the north of Europe was cut off. Our embassies and legations were packed off at an hour's notice, and it was as if we had suddenly come back to the middle ages. The dumb astonishment visible all over London the next morning, when the papers came out void of news, merely hinting at what had happened, was one of the most startling things in this war of surprises. But everything had been arranged beforehand; nor ought we to have been

surprised, for we had seen the same power, only a few months before, move down half a million of men on a few days' notice, to conquer the greatest military nation in Europe, with no more fuss than our War Office used to make over the transport of a brigade from Aldershot to Brighton,—and this, too, without the allies it had now. What happened now was not a bit more wonderful in reality; but people of this country could not bring themselves to believe that what had never occurred before to England could ever possibly happen. Like our neighbours, we became wise when it was too late.

Of course the papers were not long in getting news—even the mighty organisation set at work could not shut out a special correspondent; and in a very few days, although the telegraphs and railways were intercepted right across Europe, the main facts oozed out. An embargo had been laid on all the shipping in every port from the Baltic to Ostend; the fleets of the two great Powers had moved out, and it was supposed were assembled in the great northern harbour, and troops were hurrying on board all the steamers detained in these places, most of which were British vessels. It was clear that invasion was intended. Even then we might have been saved, if the fleet had been ready. The forts which guarded the flotilla were perhaps too strong for shipping to attempt; but an ironclad or two, handled as British sailors knew how to use

them, might have destroyed or damaged a part of the transports, and delayed the expedition, giving us what we wanted, time. But then the best part of the fleet had been decoyed down to the Dardanelles, and what remained of the Channel squadron was looking after Fenian filibusters off the west of Ireland; so it was ten days before the fleet was got together, and by that time it was plain the enemy's preparations were too far advanced to be stopped by a *coup-de-main*. Information, which came chiefly through Italy, came slowly, and was more or less vague and uncertain; but this much was known, that at least a couple of hundred thousand men were embarked or ready to be put on board ships, and that the flotilla was guarded by more ironclads than we could then muster. I suppose it was the uncertainty as to the point the enemy would aim at for landing, and the fear lest he should give us the go-by, that kept the fleet for several days in the Downs; but it was not until the Tuesday fortnight after the declaration of war that it weighed anchor and steamed away for the North Sea. Of course you have read about the Queen's visit to the fleet the day before, and how she sailed round the ships in her yacht, and went on board the flag-ship to take leave of the admiral; how, overcome with emotion, she told him that the safety of the country was committed to his keeping. You remember, too, the gallant old officer's reply, and how all the ships'

yards were manned, and how lustily the tars cheered as her Majesty was rowed off. The account was of course telegraphed to London, and the high spirits of the fleet infected the whole town. I was outside the Charing Cross station when the Queen's special train from Dover arrived, and from the cheering and shouting which greeted her Majesty as she drove away, you might have supposed we had already won a great victory. The leading journal, which had gone in strongly for the army reduction carried out during the session, and had been nervous and desponding in tone during the past fortnight, suggesting all sorts of compromises as a way of getting out of the war, came out in a very jubilant form next morning. "Panic-stricken inquirers," it said, "ask now, where are the means of meeting the invasion? We reply that the invasion will never take place. A British fleet, manned by British sailors whose courage and enthusiasm are reflected in the people of this country, is already on the way to meet the presumptuous foe. The issue of a contest between British ships and those of any other country, under anything like equal odds, can never be doubtful. England awaits with calm confidence the issue of the impending action."

Such were the words of the leading article, and so we all felt. It was on Tuesday, the 10th of August, that the fleet sailed from the Downs. It took with it a submarine cable to lay down as it

advanced, so that continuous communication was kept up, and the papers were publishing special editions every few minutes with the latest news. This was the first time such a thing had been done, and the feat was accepted as a good omen. Whether it is true that the Admiralty made use of the cable to keep on sending contradictory orders, which took the command out of the admiral's hands, I can't say; but all that the admiral sent in return was a few messages of the briefest kind, which neither the Admiralty nor any one else could have made any use of. Such a ship had gone off reconnoitring; such another had rejoined—fleet was in latitude so and so. This went on till the Thursday morning. I had just come up to town by train as usual, and was walking to my office, when the newsboys began to cry, "New edition—enemy's fleet in sight!" You may imagine the scene in London! Business still went on at the banks, for bills matured although the independence of the country was being fought out under our own eyes, so to say, and the speculators were active enough. But even with the people who were making and losing their fortunes, the interest in the fleet overcame everything else; men who went to pay in or draw out their money stopped to show the last bulletin to the cashier. As for the street, you could hardly get along for the crowd stopping to buy and read the papers; while at every house or office the members sat restlessly in

the common room, as if to keep together for company, sending out some one of their number every few minutes to get the latest edition. At least this is what happened at our office; but to sit still was as impossible as to do anything, and most of us went out and wandered about among the crowd, under a sort of feeling that the news was got quicker at in this way. Bad as were the times coming, I think the sickening suspense of that day, and the shock which followed, was almost the worst that we underwent. It was about ten o'clock that the first telegram came; an hour later the wire announced that the admiral had signalled to form line of battle, and shortly afterwards that the order was given to bear down on the enemy and engage. At twelve came the announcement, "Fleet opened fire about three miles to leeward of us"—that is, the ship with the cable. So far all had been expectancy; then came the first token of calamity. "An ironclad has been blown up"—"the enemy's torpedoes are doing great damage"—"the flag-ship is laid aboard the enemy"—"the flag-ship appears to be sinking"—"the vice-admiral has signalled to"—there the cable became silent, and, as you know, we heard no more till, two days afterwards, the solitary ironclad which escaped the disaster steamed into Portsmouth.

Then the whole story came out—how our sailors, gallant as ever, had tried to close with the enemy;

how the latter evaded the conflict at close quarters, and, sheering off, left behind them the fatal engines which sent our ships, one after the other, to the bottom; how all this happened almost in a few minutes. The Government, it appears, had received warnings of this invention; but to the nation this stunning blow was utterly unexpected. That Thursday I had to go home early for regimental drill, but it was impossible to remain doing nothing, so when that was over I went up to town again, and after waiting in expectation of news which never came, and missing the midnight train, I walked home. It was a hot sultry night, and I did not arrive till near sunrise. The whole town was quite still—the lull before the storm; and as I let myself in with my latch-key, and went softly up-stairs to my room to avoid waking the sleeping household, I could not but contrast the peacefulness of the morning—no sound breaking the silence but the singing of the birds in the garden—with the passionate remorse and indignation that would break out with the day. Perhaps the inmates of the rooms were as wakeful as myself; but the house in its stillness was just as it used to be when I came home alone from balls or parties in the happy days gone by. Tired though I was, I could not sleep, so I went down to the river and had a swim; and on returning found the household was assembling for early breakfast. A sorrowful household it was, although the burden

pressing on each was partly an unseen one. My father, doubting whether his firm could last through the day; my mother, her distress about my brother, now with his regiment on the coast, already exceeding that which she felt for the public misfortune, had come down, although hardly fit to leave her room. My sister Clara was worst of all, for she could not but try to disguise her special interest in the fleet; and though we had all guessed that her heart was given to the young lieutenant in the flagship—the first vessel to go down—a love unclaimed could not be told, nor could we express the sympathy we felt for the poor girl. That breakfast, the last meal we ever had together, was soon ended, and my father and I went up to town by an early train, and got there just as the fatal announcement of the loss of the fleet was telegraphed from Portsmouth.

The panic and excitement of that day—how the funds went down to 35; the run upon the bank and its stoppage; the fall of half the houses in the city; how the Government issued a notification suspending specie payment and the tendering of bills—this last precaution too late for most firms, Graham and Co. among the number, which stopped payment as soon as my father got to the office; the call to arms, and the unanimous response of the country—all this is history which I need not repeat. You wish to hear about my own share in the business of the

time. Well, volunteering had increased immensely from the day war was proclaimed, and our regiment went up in a day or two from its usual strength of 600 to nearly 1000. But the stock of rifles was deficient. We were promised a further supply in a few days, which, however, we never received; and while waiting for them the regiment had to be divided into two parts, the recruits drilling with the rifles in the morning, and we old hands in the evening. The failures and stoppage of work on this black Friday threw an immense number of young men out of employment, and we recruited up to 1400 strong by the next day; but what was the use of all these men without arms? On the Saturday it was announced that a lot of smooth-bore muskets in store at the Tower would be served out to regiments applying for them, and a regular scramble took place among the volunteers for them, and our people got hold of a couple of hundred. But you might almost as well have tried to learn rifle-drill with a broom-stick as with old brown bess; besides, there was no smooth-bore ammunition in the country. A national subscription was opened for the manufacture of rifles at Birmingham, which ran up to a couple of millions in two days, but, like everything else, this came too late. To return to the volunteers: camps had been formed a fortnight before at Dover, Brighton, Harwich, and other places, of regulars and militia, and the headquarters

of most of the volunteer regiments were attached to one or other of them, and the volunteers themselves used to go down for drill from day to day, as they could spare time, and on Friday an order went out that they should be permanently embodied; but the metropolitan volunteers were still kept about London as a sort of reserve, till it could be seen at what point the invasion would take place. We were all told off to brigades and divisions. Our brigade consisted of the 4th Royal Surrey Militia, the 1st Surrey Administrative Battalion, as it was called, at Clapham, the 7th Surrey Volunteers at Southwark, and ourselves; but only our battalion and the militia were quartered in the same place, and the whole brigade had merely two or three afternoons together at brigade exercise in Bushey Park before the march took place. Our brigadier belonged to a line regiment in Ireland, and did not join till the very morning the order came. Meanwhile, during the preliminary fortnight, the militia colonel commanded. But though we volunteers were busy with our drill and preparations, those of us who, like myself, belonged to Government offices, had more than enough of office work to do, as you may suppose. The volunteer clerks were allowed to leave office at four o'clock, but the rest were kept hard at the desk far into the night. Orders to the lord-lieutenants, to the magistrates, notifications, all the arrangements for cleaning out

the workhouses for hospitals—these and a hundred other things had to be managed in our office, and there was as much bustle indoors as out. Fortunate we were to be so busy—the people to be pitied were those who had nothing to do. And on Sunday (that was the 15th August) work went on just as usual. We had an early parade and drill, and I went up to town by the nine o'clock train in my uniform, taking my rifle with me in case of accidents, and luckily too, as it turned out, a mackintosh overcoat. When I got to Waterloo there were all sorts of rumours afloat. A fleet had been seen off the Downs, and some of the despatch-boats which were hovering about the coasts brought news that there was a large flotilla off Harwich, but nothing could be seen from the shore, as the weather was hazy. The enemy's light ships had taken and sunk all the fishing-boats they could catch, to prevent the news of their whereabouts reaching us; but a few escaped during the night and reported that the Inconstant frigate coming home from North America, without any knowledge of what had taken place, had sailed right into the enemy's fleet and been captured. In town the troops were all getting ready for a move; the Guards in the Wellington Barracks were under arms, and their baggage-waggons packed and drawn up in the Bird-cage Walk. The usual guard at the Horse Guards had been withdrawn, and orderlies and staff-officers

were going to and fro. All this I saw on the way to my office, where I worked away till twelve o'clock, and then feeling hungry after my early breakfast, I went across Parliament Street to my club to get some luncheon. There were about half-a-dozen men in the coffee-room, none of whom I knew; but in a minute or two Danvers of the Treasury entered in a tremendous hurry. From him I got the first bit of authentic news I had had that day. The enemy had landed in force near Harwich, and the metropolitan regiments were ordered down there to reinforce the troops already collected in that neighbourhood; his regiment was to parade at one o'clock, and he had come to get something to eat before starting. We bolted a hurried lunch, and were just leaving the club when a messenger from the Treasury came running into the hall.

"Oh, Mr Danvers," said he, "I've come to look for you, sir; the secretary says that all the gentlemen are wanted at the office, and that you must please not one of you go with the regiments."

"The devil!" cried Danvers.

"Do you know if that order extends to all the public offices?" I asked.

"I don't know," said the man, "but I believe it do. I know there's messengers gone round to all the clubs and luncheon-bars to look for the gentlemen; the secretary says it's quite impossible any one can be spared just now, there's so much work

to do; there's orders just come to send off our records to Birmingham to-night."

I did not wait to condole with Danvers, but, just glancing up Whitehall to see if any of our messengers were in pursuit, I ran off as hard as I could for Westminster Bridge, and so to the Waterloo station.

The place had quite changed its aspect since the morning. The regular service of trains had ceased, and the station and approaches were full of troops, among them the Guards and artillery. Everything was very orderly: the men had piled arms, and were standing about in groups. There was no sign of high spirits or enthusiasm. Matters had become too serious. Every man's face reflected the general feeling that we had neglected the warnings given us, and that now the danger so long derided as impossible and absurd had really come and found us unprepared. But the soldiers, if grave, looked determined, like men who meant to do their duty whatever might happen. A train full of guardsmen was just starting for Guildford. I was told it would stop at Surbiton, and, with several other volunteers, hurrying like myself to join our regiment, got a place in it. We did not arrive a moment too soon, for the regiment was marching from Kingston down to the station. The destination of our brigade was the east coast. Empty carriages were drawn up in the siding, and our regi-

ment was to go first. A large crowd was assembled to see it off, including the recruits who had joined during the last fortnight, and who formed by far the largest part of our strength. They were to stay behind, and were certainly very much in the way already; for as all the officers and sergeants belonged to the active part, there was no one to keep discipline among them, and they came crowding around us, breaking the ranks and making it difficult to get into the train. Here I saw our new brigadier for the first time. He was a soldier-like man, and no doubt knew his duty, but he appeared new to volunteers, and did not seem to know how to deal with gentlemen privates. I wanted very much to run home and get my greatcoat and knapsack, which I had bought a few days ago, but feared to be left behind; a good-natured recruit volunteered to fetch them for me, but he had not returned before we started, and I began the campaign with a kit consisting of a mackintosh and a small pouch of tobacco.

It was a tremendous squeeze in the train; for, besides the ten men sitting down, there were three or four standing up in every compartment, and the afternoon was close and sultry, and there were so many stoppages on the way that we took nearly an hour and a half crawling up to Waterloo. It was between five and six in the afternoon when we arrived there, and it was nearly seven before we marched up

to the Shoreditch station. The whole place was filled up with stores and ammunition, to be sent off to the east, so we piled arms in the street and scattered about to get food and drink, of which most of us stood in need, especially the latter, for some were already feeling the worse for the heat and crush. I was just stepping into a public-house with Travers, when who should drive up but his pretty wife? Most of our friends had paid their adieus at the Surbiton station, but she had driven up by the road in his brougham, bringing their little boy to have a last look at papa. She had also brought his knapsack and greatcoat, and, what was still more acceptable, a basket containing fowls, tongue, bread-and-butter, and biscuits, and a couple of bottles of claret, — which priceless luxuries they insisted on my sharing.

Meanwhile the hours went on. The 4th Surrey Militia, which had marched all the way from Kingston, had come up, as well as the other volunteer corps; the station had been partly cleared of the stores that encumbered it; some artillery, two militia regiments, and a battalion of the line, had been despatched, and our turn to start had come, and long lines of carriages were drawn up ready for us; but still we remained in the street. You may fancy the scene. There seemed to be as many people as ever in London, and we could hardly move for the crowds of spectators—fellows hawk-

ing fruits and volunteers' comforts, newsboys and so forth, to say nothing of the cabs and omnibuses; while orderlies and staff-officers were constantly riding up with messages. A good many of the militiamen, and some of our people too, had taken more than enough to drink; perhaps a hot sun had told on empty stomachs; anyhow, they became very noisy. The din, dirt, and heat were indescribable. So the evening wore on, and all the information our officers could get from the brigadier, who appeared to be acting under another general, was, that orders had come to stand fast for the present. Gradually the street became quieter and cooler. The brigadier, who, by way of setting an example, had remained for some hours without leaving his saddle, had got a chair out of a shop, and sat nodding in it; most of the men were lying down or sitting on the pavement—some sleeping, some smoking. In vain had Travers begged his wife to go home. She declared that, having come so far, she would stay and see the last of us. The brougham had been sent away to a by-street, as it blocked up the road; so he sat on a doorstep, she by him on the knapsack. Little Arthur, who had been delighted at the bustle and the uniforms, and in high spirits, became at last very cross, and eventually cried himself to sleep in his father's arms, his golden hair and one little dimpled arm hanging over his shoulder. Thus went on the

weary hours, till suddenly the assembly sounded, and we all started up. We were to return to Waterloo. The landing on the east was only a feint—so ran the rumour—the real attack was on the south. Anything seemed better than indecision and delay, and, tired though we were, the march back was gladly hailed. Mrs Travers, who made us take the remains of the luncheon with us, we left to look for her carriage; little Arthur, who was awake again, but very good and quiet, in her arms.

We did not reach Waterloo till nearly midnight, and there was some delay in starting again. Several volunteer and militia regiments had arrived from the north; the station and all its approaches were jammed up with men, and trains were being despatched away as fast as they could be made up. All this time no news had reached us since the first announcement; but the excitement then aroused had now passed away under the influence of fatigue and want of sleep, and most of us dozed off as soon as we got under way. I did, at any rate, and was awoke by the train stopping at Leatherhead. There was an up-train returning to town, and some persons in it were bringing up news from the coast. We could not, from our part of the train, hear what they said, but the rumour was passed up from one carriage to another. The enemy had landed in force at Worthing. Their position had been at-

tacked by the troops from the camp near Brighton, and the action would be renewed in the morning. The volunteers had behaved very well. This was all the information we could get. So, then, the invasion had come at last. It was clear, at any rate, from what was said, that the enemy had not been driven back yet, and we should be in time most likely to take a share in the defence. It was sunrise when the train crawled into Dorking, for there had been numerous stoppages on the way; and here it was pulled up for a long time, and we were told to get out and stretch ourselves — an order gladly responded to, for we had been very closely packed all night. Most of us, too, took the opportunity to make an early breakfast off the food we had brought from Shoreditch. I had the remains of Mrs Travers's fowl and some bread wrapped up in my waterproof, which I shared with one or two less provident comrades. We could see from our halting-place that the line was blocked with trains beyond and behind. It must have been about eight o'clock when we got orders to take our seats again, and the train began to move slowly on towards Horsham. Horsham Junction was the point to be occupied—so the rumour went; but about ten o'clock, when halting at a small station a few miles short of it, the order came to leave the train, and our brigade formed in column on the highroad. Beyond us was some field-artillery; and further

on, so we were told by a staff-officer, another brigade, which was to make up a division with ours. After more delays the line began to move, but not forwards; our route was towards the north-west, and a sort of suspicion of the state of affairs flashed across my mind. Horsham was already occupied by the enemy's advanced-guard, and we were to fall back on Leith Common, and take up a position threatening his flank, should he advance either to Guildford or Dorking. This was soon confirmed by what the colonel was told by the brigadier and passed down the ranks; and just now, for the first time, the boom of artillery came up on the light south breeze. In about an hour the firing ceased. What did it mean? We could not tell. Meanwhile our march continued. The day was very close and sultry, and the clouds of dust stirred up by our feet almost suffocated us. I had saved a soda-water bottleful of yesterday's claret; but this went only a short way, for there were many mouths to share it with, and the thirst soon became as bad as ever. Several of the regiment fell out from faintness, and we made frequent halts to rest and let the stragglers come up. At last we reached the top of Leith Hill. It is a striking spot, being the highest point in the south of England. The view from it is splendid, and most lovely did the country look this summer day, although the grass was brown from the long drought. It was a great relief to get from the

dusty road on to the common, and at the top of the hill there was a refreshing breeze. We could see now, for the first time, the whole of our division. Our own regiment did not muster more than 500, for it contained a large number of Government office men who had been detained, like Danvers, for duty in town, and others were not much larger; but the militia regiment was very strong, and the whole division, I was told, mustered nearly 5000 rank and file. We could see other troops also in extension of our division, and could count a couple of field-batteries of Royal Artillery, besides some heavy guns, belonging to the volunteers apparently, drawn by cart-horses. The cooler air, the sense of numbers, and the evident strength of the position we held, raised our spirits, which, I am not ashamed to say, had all the morning been depressed. It was not that we were not eager to close with the enemy, but that the counter-marching and halting ominously betokened a vacillation of purpose in those who had the guidance of affairs. Here in two days the invaders had got more than twenty miles inland, and nothing effectual had been done to stop them. And the ignorance in which we volunteers, from the colonel downwards, were kept of their movements, filled us with uneasiness. We could not but depict to ourselves the enemy as carrying out all the while firmly his well-considered scheme of attack, and contrasting it with our own

uncertainty of purpose. The very silence with which his advance appeared to be conducted filled us with mysterious awe. Meanwhile the day wore on, and we became faint with hunger, for we had eaten nothing since daybreak. No provisions came up, and there were no signs of any commissariat officers. It seems that when we were at the Waterloo station a whole trainful of provisions was drawn up there, and our colonel proposed that one of the trucks should be taken off and attached to our train, so that we might have some food at hand; but the officer in charge, an assistant-controller I think they called him — this control department was a new-fangled affair which did us almost as much harm as the enemy in the long-run—said his orders were to keep all the stores together, and that he couldn't issue any without authority from the head of his department. So we had to go without. Those who had tobacco smoked—indeed there is no solace like a pipe under such circumstances. The militia regiment, I heard afterwards, had two days' provisions in their haversacks; it was we volunteers who had no haversacks, and nothing to put in them. All this time, I should tell you, while we were lying on the grass with our arms piled, the General, with the brigadiers and staff, was riding about slowly from point to point of the edge of the common, looking out with his glass towards the south valley. Orderlies and staff-officers were constantly coming,

and about three o'clock there arrived up a road that led towards Horsham a small body of lancers and a regiment of yeomanry, who had, it appears, been out in advance, and now drew up a short way in front of us in column facing to the south. Whether they could see anything in their front I could not tell, for we were behind the crest of the hill ourselves, and so could not look into the valley below; but shortly afterwards the assembly sounded. Commanding officers were called out by the General, and received some brief instructions; and the column began to march again towards London, the militia this time coming last in our brigade. A rumour regarding the object of this counter-march soon spread through the ranks. The enemy was not going to attack us here, but was trying to turn the position on both sides, one column pointing to Reigate, the other to Aldershot; and so we must fall back and take up a position at Dorking. The line of the great chalk-range was to be defended. A large force was concentrating at Guildford, another at Reigate, and we should find supports at Dorking. The enemy would be awaited in these positions. Such, so far as we privates could get at the facts, was to be the plan of operations. Down the hill, therefore, we marched. From one or two points we could catch a brief sight of the railway in the valley below running from Dorking to Horsham. Men in red were working upon it here and there.

They were the Royal Engineers, some one said, breaking up the line. On we marched. The dust seemed worse than ever. In one village through which we passed—I forget the name now—there was a pump on the green. Here we stopped and had a good drink; and passing by a large farm, the farmer's wife and two or three of her maids stood at the gate and handed us hunches of bread and cheese out of some baskets. I got the share of a bit, but the bottom of the good woman's baskets must soon have been reached. Not a thing else was to be had till we got to Dorking about six o'clock; indeed most of the farm-houses appeared deserted already. On arriving there we were drawn up in the street, and just opposite was a baker's shop. Our fellows asked leave at first by twos and threes to go in and buy some loaves, but soon others began to break off and crowd into the shop, and at last a regular scramble took place. If there had been any order preserved, and a regular distribution arranged, they would no doubt have been steady enough, but hunger makes men selfish; each man felt that his stopping behind would do no good — he would simply lose his share; so it ended by almost the whole regiment joining in the scrimmage, and the shop was cleared out in a couple of minutes; while as for paying, you could not get your hand into your pocket for the crush. The colonel tried in vain to stop the row; some of the officers were as

bad as the men. Just then a staff-officer rode by; he could scarcely make way for the crowd, and was pushed against rather rudely, and in a passion he called out to us to behave properly, like soldiers, and not like a parcel of roughs. "Oh, blow it, governor," said Dick Wake, "you aren't agoing to come between a poor cove and his grub." Wake was an articled attorney, and, as we used to say in those days, a cheeky young chap, although a good-natured fellow enough. At this speech, which was followed by some more remarks of the sort from those about him, the staff-officer became angrier still. "Orderly," cried he to the lancer riding behind him, "take that man to the provost-marshal. As for you, sir," he said, turning to our colonel, who sat on his horse silent with astonishment, "if you don't want some of your men shot before their time, you and your precious officers had better keep this rabble in a little better order;" and poor Dick, who looked crestfallen enough, would certainly have been led off at the tail of the sergeant's horse, if the brigadier had not come up and arranged matters, and marched us off to the hill beyond the town. This incident made us both angry and crestfallen. We were annoyed at being so roughly spoken to: at the same time we felt we had deserved it, and were ashamed of the misconduct. Then, too, we had lost confidence in our colonel, after the poor figure he cut in the affair.

He was a good fellow, the colonel, and showed himself a brave one next day; but he aimed too much at being popular, and didn't understand a bit how to command.

To resume:—We had scarcely reached the hill above the town, which we were told was to be our bivouac for the night, when the welcome news came that a food-train had arrived at the station; but there were no carts to bring the things up, so a fatigue-party went down and carried back a supply to us in their arms,—loaves, a barrel of rum, packets of tea, and joints of meat—abundance for all; but there was not a kettle or a cooking-pot in the regiment, and we could not eat the meat raw. The colonel and officers were no better off. They had arranged to have a regular mess, with crockery, steward, and all complete, but the establishment never turned up, and what had become of it no one knew. Some of us were sent back into the town to see what we could procure in the way of cooking utensils. We found the street full of artillery, baggage-waggons, and mounted officers, and volunteers shopping like ourselves; and all the houses appeared to be occupied by troops. We succeeded in getting a few kettles and saucepans, and I obtained for myself a leather bag, with a strap to go over the shoulder, which proved very handy afterwards; and thus laden, we trudged back to our camp on the hill, filling the kettles with dirty water from a little

stream which runs between the hill and the town, for there was none to be had above. It was nearly a couple of miles each way; and, exhausted as we were with marching and want of rest, we were almost too tired to eat. The cooking was of the roughest, as you may suppose; all we could do was to cut off slices of the meat and boil them in the saucepans, using our fingers for forks. The tea, however, was very refreshing; and, thirsty as we were, we drank it by the gallon. Just before it grew dark, the brigade-major came round, and, with the adjutant, showed our colonel how to set a picket in advance of our line a little way down the face of the hill. It was not necessary to place one, I suppose, because the town in our front was still occupied with troops; but no doubt the practice would be useful. We had also a quarter-guard, and a line of sentries in front and rear of our line, communicating with those of the regiments on our flanks. Firewood was plentiful, for the hill was covered with beautiful wood; but it took some time to collect it, for we had nothing but our pocket-knives to cut down the branches with.

So we lay down to sleep. My company had no duty, and we had the night undisturbed to ourselves; but, tired though I was, the excitement and the novelty of the situation made sleep difficult. And although the night was still and warm, and we were sheltered by the woods, I soon found it chilly

with no better covering than my thin dust-coat, the more so as my clothes, saturated with perspiration during the day, had never dried; and before daylight I woke from a short nap, shivering with cold, and was glad to get warm with others by a fire. I then noticed that the opposite hills on the south were dotted with fires; and we thought at first they must belong to the enemy, but we were told that the ground up there was still held by a strong rear-guard of regulars, and that there need be no fear of a surprise.

At the first sign of dawn the bugles of the regiments sounded the *reveillé*, and we were ordered to fall in, and the roll was called. About twenty men were absent, who had fallen out sick the day before; they had been sent up to London by train during the night, I believe. After standing in column for about half an hour, the brigade-major came down with orders to pile arms and stand easy; and perhaps half an hour afterwards we were told to get breakfast as quickly as possible, and to cook a day's food at the same time. This operation was managed pretty much in the same way as the evening before, except that we had our cooking pots and kettles ready. Meantime there was leisure to look around, and from where we stood there was a commanding view of one of the most beautiful scenes in England. Our regiment was drawn up on the extremity of the ridge which runs from

Guildford to Dorking. This is indeed merely a part of the great chalk-range which extends from beyond Aldershot east to the Medway; but there is a gap in the ridge just here where the little stream that runs past Dorking turns suddenly to the north, to find its way to the Thames. We stood on the slope of the hill, as it trends down eastward towards this gap, and had passed our bivouac in what appeared to be a gentleman's park. A little way above us, and to our right, was a very fine country-seat to which the park was attached, now occupied by the headquarters of our division. From this house the hill sloped steeply down southward to the valley below, which runs nearly east and west parellel to the ridge, and carries the railway and the road from Guildford to Reigate; and in which valley, immediately in front of the chateau, and perhaps a mile and a half distant from it, was the little town of Dorking, nestled in the trees, and rising up the foot of the slopes on the other side of the valley which stretched away to Leith Common, the scene of yesterday's march. Thus the main part of the town of Dorking was on our right front, but the suburbs stretched away eastward nearly to our proper front, culminating in a small railway station, from which the grassy slopes of the park rose up dotted with shrubs and trees to where we were standing. Round this railway station was a cluster of villas and one or two mills, of whose gardens we

thus had a bird's-eye view, their little ornamental ponds glistening like looking-glasses in the morning sun. Immediately on our left the park sloped steeply down to the gap before mentioned, through which ran the little stream, as well as the railway from Epsom to Brighton, nearly due north and south, meeting the Guildford and Reigate line at right angles. Close to the point of intersection and the little station already mentioned, was the station of the former line where we had stopped the day before. Beyond the gap on the east (our left), and in continuation of our ridge, rose the chalk-hill again. The shoulder of this ridge overlooking the gap is called Box Hill, from the shrubbery of box-wood with which it was covered. Its sides were very steep, and the top of the ridge was covered with troops. The natural strength of our position was manifested at a glance; a high grassy ridge steep to the south, with a stream in front, and but little cover up the sides. It seemed made for a battle-field. The weak point was the gap; the ground at the junction of the railways and the roads immediately at the entrance of the gap formed a little valley, dotted, as I have said, with buildings and gardens. This, in one sense, was the key of the position; for although it would not be tenable while we held the ridge commanding it, the enemy by carrying this point and advancing through the gap would cut our line in two. But you must not

suppose I scanned the ground thus critically at the time. Anybody, indeed, might have been struck with the natural advantages of our position; but what, as I remember, most impressed me, was the peaceful beauty of the scene—the little town with the outline of the houses obscured by a blue mist, the massive crispness of the foliage, the outlines of the great trees, lighted up by the sun, and relieved by deep-blue shade. So thick was the timber here, rising up the southern slopes of the valley, that it looked almost as if it might have been a primeval forest. The quiet of the scene was the more impressive because contrasted in the mind with the scenes we expected to follow; and I can remember, as if it were yesterday, the sensation of bitter regret that it should now be too late to avert this coming desecration of our country, which might so easily have been prevented. A little firmness, a little prevision on the part of our rulers, even a little common-sense, and this great calamity would have been rendered utterly impossible. Too late, alas! We were like the foolish virgins in the parable.

But you must not suppose the scene immediately around was gloomy: the camp was brisk and bustling enough. We had got over the stress of weariness; our stomachs were full; we felt a natural enthusiasm at the prospect of having so soon to take a part as the real defenders of the country, and we were inspirited at the sight of the large force that

was now assembled. Along the slopes which trended off to the rear of our ridge, troops came marching up — volunteers, militia, cavalry, and guns; these, I heard, had come down from the north as far as Leatherhead the night before, and had marched over at daybreak. Long trains, too, began to arrive by the rail through the gap, one after the other, containing militia and volunteers, who moved up to the ridge to the right and left, and took up their position, massed for the most part on the slopes which ran up from, and in rear of, where we stood. We now formed part of an army-corps, we were told, consisting of three divisions, but what regiments composed the other two divisions I never heard. All this movement we could distinctly see from our position, for we had hurried over our breakfast, expecting every minute that the battle would begin, and now stood or sat about on the ground near our piled arms. Early in the morning, too, we saw a very long train come along the valley from the direction of Guildford, full of redcoats. It halted at the little station at our feet, and the troops alighted. We could soon make out their bear-skins. They were the Guards, coming to reinforce this part of the line. Leaving a detachment of skirmishers to hold the line of the railway embankment, the main body marched up with a springy step, and with the band playing, and drew up across the gap on our

left, in prolongation of our line. There appeared to be three battalions of them, for they formed up in that number of columns at short intervals.

Shortly after this I was sent over to Box Hill with a message from our colonel to the colonel of a volunteer regiment stationed there, to know whether an ambulance-cart was obtainable, as it was reported this regiment was well supplied with carriage, whereas we were without any: my mission, however, was futile. Crossing the valley, I found a scene of great confusion at the railway station. Trains were still coming in with stores, ammunition, guns, and appliances of all sorts, which were being unloaded as fast as possible; but there were scarcely any means of getting the things off. There were plenty of waggons of all sorts, but hardly any horses to draw them, and the whole place was blocked up; while, to add to the confusion, a regular exodus had taken place of the people from the town, who had been warned that it was likely to be the scene of fighting. Ladies and women of all sorts and ages, and children, some with bundles, some empty-handed, were seeking places in the train, but there appeared no one on the spot authorised to grant them, and these poor creatures were pushing their way up and down, vainly asking for information and permission to get away. In the crowd I observed our surgeon, who likewise was in search of an ambulance of some sort: his

whole professional apparatus, he said, consisted of a case of instruments. Also in the crowd I stumbled upon Wood, Travers's old coachman. He had been sent down by his mistress to Guildford, because it was supposed our regiment had gone there, riding the horse, and laden with a supply of things—food, blankets, and, of course, a letter. He had also brought my knapsack; but at Guildford the horse was pressed for artillery work, and a receipt for it given him in exchange, so he had been obliged to leave all the heavy packages there, including my knapsack; but the faithful old man had brought on as many things as he could carry, and hearing that we should be found in this part, had walked over thus laden from Guildford. He said that place was crowded with troops, and that the heights were lined with them the whole way between the two towns; also, that some trains with wounded had passed up from the coast in the night, through Guildford. I led him off to where our regiment was, relieving the old man from part of the load he was staggering under. The food sent was not now so much needed, but the plates, knives, &c., and drinking-vessels, promised to be handy—and Travers, you may be sure, was delighted to get his letter; while a couple of newspapers the old man had brought were eagerly competed for by all, even at this critical moment, for we had heard no authentic news since we left London on Sunday.

And even at this distance of time, although I only glanced down the paper, I can remember almost the very words I read there. They were both copies of the same paper: the first, published on Sunday evening, when the news had arrived of the successful landing at three points, was written in a tone of despair. The country must confess that it had been taken by surprise. The conqueror would be satisfied with the humiliation inflicted by a peace dictated on our own shores; it was the clear duty of the Government to accept the best terms obtainable, and to avoid further bloodshed and disaster, and avert the fall of our tottering mercantile credit. The next morning's issue was in quite a different tone. Apparently the enemy had received a check, for we were here exhorted to resistance. An impregnable position was to be taken up along the Downs, a force was concentrating there far outnumbering the rash invaders, who, with an invincible line before them, and the sea behind, had no choice between destruction or surrender. Let there be no pusillanimous talk of negotiation, the fight must be fought out; and there could be but one issue. England, expectant but calm, awaited with confidence the result of the attack on its unconquerable volunteers. The writing appeared to me eloquent, but rather inconsistent. The same paper said the Government had sent off 500 workmen from Woolwich, to open a branch arsenal at Birmingham.

All this time we had nothing to do, except to change our position, which we did every few minutes, now moving up the hill farther to our right, now taking ground lower down to our left, as one order after another was brought down the line; but the staff-officers were galloping about perpetually with orders, while the rumble of the artillery as they moved about from one part of the field to another went on almost incessantly. At last the whole line stood to arms, the bands struck up, and the general commanding our army-corps came riding down with his staff. We had seen him several times before, as we had been moving frequently about the position during the morning; but he now made a sort of formal inspection. He was a tall thin man, with long light hair, very well mounted, and as he sat his horse with an erect seat, and came prancing down the line, at a little distance he looked as if he might be five-and-twenty; but I believe he had served more than fifty years, and had been made a peer for services performed when quite an old man. I remember that he had more decorations than there was room for on the breast of his coat, and wore them suspended like a necklace round his neck. Like all the other generals, he was dressed in blue, with a cocked-hat and feathers — a bad plan, I thought, for it made them very conspicuous. The general halted before our battalion, and after looking at us a while, made a short address: We had a

post of honour next her Majesty's Guards, and would show ourselves worthy of it, and of the name of Englishmen. It did not need, he said, to be a general to see the strength of our position; it was impregnable, if properly held. Let us wait till the enemy was well pounded, and then the word would be given to go at him. Above everything, we must be steady. He then shook hands with our colonel, we gave him a cheer, and he rode on to where the Guards were drawn up.

Now then, we thought, the battle will begin. But still there were no signs of the enemy; and the air, though hot and sultry, began to be very hazy, so that you could scarcely see the town below, and the hills opposite were merely a confused blur, in which no features could be distinctly made out. After a while, the tension of feeling which followed the general's address relaxed, and we began to feel less as if everything depended on keeping our rifles firmly grasped: we were told to pile arms again, and got leave to go down by tens and twenties to the stream below to drink. This stream, and all the hedges and banks on our side of it, were held by our skirmishers, but the town had been abandoned. The position appeared an excellent one, except that the enemy, when they came, would have almost better cover than our men. While I was down at the brook, a column emerged from the town, making for our position.

We thought for a moment it was the enemy, and you could not make out the colour of the uniforms for the dust; but it turned out to be our rear-guard, falling back from the opposite hills which they had occupied the previous night. One battalion, of rifles, halted for a few minutes at the stream to let the men drink, and I had a minute's talk with a couple of the officers. They had formed part of the force which had attacked the enemy on their first landing. They had it all their own way, they said, at first, and could have beaten the enemy back easily if they had been properly supported; but the whole thing was mismanaged. The volunteers came on very pluckily, they said, but they got into confusion, and so did the militia, and the attack failed with serious loss. It was the wounded of this force which had passed through Guildford in the night. The officers asked us eagerly about the arrangements for the battle, and when we said that the Guards were the only regular troops in this part of the field, shook their heads ominously.

While we were talking, a third officer came up; he was a dark man with a smooth face and a curious excited manner. "You are volunteers, I suppose," he said, quickly, his eye flashing the while. "Well, now, look here; mind I don't want to hurt your feelings, or to say anything unpleasant, but I'll tell you what; if all you gentlemen were just to go back, and leave us to fight it out alone, it would

be a devilish good thing. We could do it a precious deal better without you, I assure you. We don't want your help, I can tell you. We would much rather be left alone, I assure you. Mind I don't want to say anything rude, but that's a fact." Having blurted out this passionately, he strode away before any one could reply, or the other officers could stop him. They apologised for his rudeness, saying that his brother, also in the regiment, had been killed on Sunday, and that this, and the sun, and marching, had affected his head. The officers told us that the enemy's advanced-guard was close behind, but that he had apparently been waiting for reinforcements, and would probably not attack in force until noon. It was, however, nearly three o'clock before the battle began. We had almost worn out the feeling of expectancy. For twelve hours had we been waiting for the coming struggle, till at last it seemed almost as if the invasion were but a bad dream, and the enemy, as yet unseen by us, had no real existence. So far things had not been very different, but for the numbers and for what we had been told, from a Volunteer review on Brighton Downs. I remember that these thoughts were passing through my mind as we lay down in groups on the grass, some smoking, some nibbling at their bread, some even asleep, when the listless state we had fallen into was suddenly disturbed by a gunshot fired from the

top of the hill on our right, close by the big house. It was the first time I had ever heard a shotted gun fired, and although it is fifty years ago, the angry whistle of the shot as it left the gun is in my ears now. The sound was soon to become common enough. We all jumped up at the report, and fell in almost without the word being given, grasping our rifles tightly, and the leading files peering forward to look for the approaching enemy. This gun was apparently the signal to begin, for now our batteries opened fire all along the line. What they were firing at I could not see, and I am sure the gunners could not see much themselves. I have told you what a haze had come over the air since the morning, and now the smoke from the guns settled like a pall over the hill, and soon we could see little but the men in our ranks, and the outline of some gunners in the battery drawn up next us on the slope on our right. This firing went on, I should think, for nearly a couple of hours, and still there was no reply. We could see the gunners—it was a troop of horse-artillery—working away like fury, ramming, loading, and running up with cartridges, the officer in command riding slowly up and down just behind his guns, and peering out with his field-glass into the mist. Once or twice they ceased firing to let their smoke clear away, but this did not do much good. For nearly two hours did this go on, and not a shot

came in reply. If a battle is like this, said Dick Wake, who was my next-hand file, it's mild work, to say the least. The words were hardly uttered when a rattle of musketry was heard in front; our skirmishers were at it, and very soon the bullets began to sing over our heads, and some struck the ground at our feet. Up to this time we had been in column; we were now deployed into line on the ground assigned to us. From the valley or gap on our left there ran a lane right up the hill almost due west, or along our front. This lane had a thick bank about four feet high, and the greater part of the regiment was drawn up behind it; but a little way up the hill the lane trended back out of the line, so the right of the regiment here left it and occupied the open grass-land of the park. The bank had been cut away at this point to admit of our going in and out. We had been told in the morning to cut down the bushes on the top of the bank, so as to make the space clear for firing over, but we had no tools to work with; however, a party of sappers had come down and finished the job. My company was on the right, and was thus beyond the shelter of the friendly bank. On our right again was the battery of artillery already mentioned; then came a battalion of the line, then more guns, then a great mass of militia and volunteers and a few line up to the big house. At least this was the order before the firing began; after that I do not know what changes took place.

And now the enemy's artillery began to open; where their guns were posted we could not see, but we began to hear the rush of the shells over our heads, and the bang as they burst just beyond. And now what took place I can really hardly tell you. Sometimes when I try and recall the scene, it seems as if it lasted for only a few minutes; yet I know, as we lay on the ground, I thought the hours would never pass away, as we watched the gunners still plying their task, firing at the invisible enemy, never stopping for a moment except when now and again a dull blow would be heard and a man fall down, then three or four of his comrades would carry him to the rear. The captain no longer rode up and down; what had become of him I do not know. Two of the guns ceased firing for a time; they had got injured in some way, and up rode an artillery general. I think I see him now, a very handsome man, with straight features and a dark mustache, his breast covered with medals. He appeared in a great rage at the guns stopping fire.

"Who commands this battery?" he cried.

"I do, Sir Henry," said an officer, riding forward, whom I had not noticed before.

The group is before me at this moment, standing out clear against the background of smoke, Sir Henry erect on his splendid charger, his flashing eye, his left arm pointing towards the enemy to

enforce something he was going to say, the young officer reining in his horse just beside him, and saluting with his right hand raised to his busby. This for a moment, then a dull thud, and both horses and riders are prostrate on the ground. A round-shot had struck all four at the saddle-line. Some of the gunners ran up to help, but neither officer could have lived many minutes. This was not the first I saw killed. Some time before this, almost immediately on the enemy's artillery opening, as we were lying, I heard something like the sound of metal striking metal, and at the same moment Dick Wake, who was next me in the ranks, leaning on his elbows, sank forward on his face. I looked round and saw what had happened; a shot fired at a high elevation, passing over his head, had struck the ground behind, nearly cutting his thigh off. It must have been the ball striking his sheathed bayonet which made the noise. Three of us carried the poor fellow to the rear, with difficulty for the shattered limb; but he was nearly dead from loss of blood when we got to the doctor, who was waiting in a sheltered hollow about two hundred yards in rear, with two other doctors in plain clothes, who had come up to help. We deposited our burden and returned to the front. Poor Wake was sensible when we left him, but apparently too shaken by the shock to be able to speak. Wood was there helping the doctors. I

paid more visits to the rear of the same sort before the evening was over.

All this time we were lying there to be fired at without returning a shot, for our skirmishers were holding the line of walls and enclosures below. However, the bank protected most of us, and the brigadier now ordered our right company, which was in the open, to get behind it also; and there we lay about four deep, the shells crashing and bullets whistling over our heads, but hardly a man being touched. Our colonel was, indeed, the only one exposed, for he rode up and down the lane at a foot-pace as steady as a rock; but he made the major and adjutant dismount, and take shelter behind the hedge, holding their horses. We were all pleased to see him so cool, and it restored our confidence in him, which had been shaken yesterday.

The time seemed interminable while we lay thus inactive. We could not, of course, help peering over the bank to try and see what was going on; but there was nothing to be made out, for now a tremendous thunderstorm, which had been gathering all day, burst on us, and a torrent of almost blinding rain came down, which obscured the view even more than the smoke, while the crashing of the thunder and the glare of the lightning could be heard and seen even above the roar and flashing of the artillery. Once the mist lifted, and I saw for a minute an attack on Box Hill, on the other side

of the gap on our left. It was like the scene at a theatre—a curtain of smoke all round and a clear gap in the centre, with a sudden gleam of evening sunshine lighting it up. The steep smooth slope of the hill was crowded with the dark-blue figures of the enemy, whom I now saw for the first time—an irregular outline in front, but very solid in rear: the whole body was moving forward by fits and starts, the men firing and advancing, the officers waving their swords, the columns closing up and gradually making way. Our people were almost concealed by the bushes at the top, whence the smoke and their fire could be seen proceeding: presently from these bushes on the crest came out a red line, and dashed down the brow of the hill, a flame of fire belching out from the front as it advanced. The enemy hesitated, gave way, and finally ran back in a confused crowd down the hill. Then the mist covered the scene, but the glimpse of this splendid charge was inspiriting, and I hoped we should show the same coolness when it came to our turn. It was about this time that our skirmishers fell back, a good many wounded, some limping along by themselves, others helped. The main body retired in very fair order, halting to turn round and fire; we could see a mounted officer of the Guards riding up and down encouraging them to be steady. Now came our turn. For a few minutes we saw nothing, but a rattle of bullets

came through the rain and mist, mostly, however, passing over the bank. We began to fire in reply, stepping up against the bank to fire, and stooping down to load; but our brigade-major rode up with an order, and the word was passed through the men to reserve our fire. In a very few moments it must have been that, when ordered to stand up, we could see the helmet-spikes and then the figures of the skirmishers as they came on: a lot of them there appeared to be, five or six deep I should say, but in loose order, each man stopping to aim and fire, and then coming forward a little. Just then the brigadier clattered on horseback up the lane. "Now, then, gentlemen, give it them hot!" he cried; and fire away we did, as fast as ever we were able. A perfect storm of bullets seemed to be flying about us too, and I thought each moment must be the last; escape seemed impossible, but I saw no one fall, for I was too busy, and so were we all, to look to the right or left, but loaded and fired as fast as we could. How long this went on I know not—it could not have been long; neither side could have lasted many minutes under such a fire, but it ended by the enemy gradually falling back, and as soon as we saw this we raised a tremendous shout, and some of us jumped up on the bank to give them our parting shots. Suddenly the order was passed down the line to cease firing, and we soon discovered the cause; a battalion of

the Guards was charging obliquely across from our left across our front. It was, I expect, their flank attack as much as our fire which had turned back the enemy; and it was a splendid sight to see their steady line as they advanced slowly across the smooth lawn below us, firing as they went, but as steady as if on parade. We felt a great elation at this moment; it seemed as if the battle was won. Just then somebody called out to look to the wounded, and for the first time I turned to glance down the rank along the lane. Then I saw that we had not beaten back the attack without loss. Immediately before me lay Bob Lawford of my office, dead on his back from a bullet through his forehead, his hand still grasping his rifle. At every step was some friend or acquaintance killed or wounded, and a few paces down the lane I found Travers, sitting with his back against the bank. A ball had gone through his lungs, and blood was coming from his mouth. I was lifting him up, but the cry of agony he gave stopped me. I then saw that this was not his only wound; his thigh was smashed by a bullet (which must have hit him when standing on the bank), and the blood streaming down mixed in a muddy puddle with the rain-water under him. Still he could not be left here, so, lifting him up as well as I could, I carried him through the gate which led out of the lane at the back to where our camp hospital was in the rear.

The movement must have caused him awful agony, for I could not support the broken thigh, and he could not restrain his groans, brave fellow though he was; but how I carried him at all I cannot make out, for he was a much bigger man than myself; but I had not gone far, one of a stream of our fellows, all on the same errand, when a bandsman and Wood met me, bringing a hurdle as a stretcher, and on this we placed him. Wood had just time to tell me that he had got a cart down in the hollow, and would endeavour to take off his master at once to Kingston, when a staff-officer rode up to call us to the ranks. "You really must not straggle in this way, gentlemen," he said; "pray keep your ranks." "But we can't leave our wounded to be trodden down and die," cried one of our fellows. "Beat off the enemy first, sir," he replied. "Gentlemen, do, pray, join your regiments, or we shall be a regular mob." And no doubt he did not speak too soon; for besides our fellows straggling to the rear, lots of volunteers from the regiments in reserve were running forward to help, till the whole ground was dotted with groups of men. I hastened back to my post, but I had just time to notice that all the ground in our rear was occupied by a thick mass of troops, much more numerous than in the morning, and a column was moving down to the left of our line, to the ground before held by the

Guards. All this time, although the musketry had slackened, the artillery-fire seemed heavier than ever; the shells screamed overhead or burst around; and I confess to feeling quite a relief at getting back to the friendly shelter of the lane. Looking over the bank, I noticed for the first time the frightful execution our fire had created. The space in front was thickly strewed with dead and badly wounded, and beyond the bodies of the fallen enemy could just be seen—for it was now getting dusk — the bear-skins and red coats of our own gallant Guards scattered over the slope, and marking the line of their victorious advance. But hardly a minute could have passed in thus looking over the field, when our brigade-major came moving up the lane on foot (I suppose his horse had been shot), crying, "Stand to your arms, volunteers! they're coming on again;" and we found ourselves a second time engaged in a hot musketry-fire. How long it went on I cannot now remember, but we could distinguish clearly the thick line of skirmishers, about sixty paces off, and mounted officers among them; and we seemed to be keeping them well in check, for they were quite exposed to our fire, while we were protected nearly up to our shoulders, when—I know not how—I became sensible that something had gone wrong. "We are taken in flank!" called out some one; and looking along the left, sure enough there were

dark figures jumping over the bank into the lane and firing up along our line. The volunteers in reserve, who had come down to take the place of the Guards, must have given way at this point; the enemy's skirmishers had got through our line, and turned our left flank. How the next move came about I cannot recollect, or whether it was without orders, but in a short time we found ourselves out of the lane, and drawn up in a straggling line about thirty yards in rear of it—at our end, that is, the other flank had fallen back a good deal more—and the enemy were lining the hedge, and numbers of them passing over and forming up on our side. Beyond our left a confused mass were retreating, firing as they went, followed by the advancing line of the enemy. We stood in this way for a short space, firing at random as fast as we could. Our colonel and major must have been shot, for there was no one to give an order, when somebody on horseback called out from behind—I think it must have been the brigadier—"Now, then, volunteers! give a British cheer, and go at them—charge!" and, with a shout, we rushed at the enemy. Some of them ran, some stopped to meet us, and for a moment it was a real hand-to-hand fight. I felt a sharp sting in my leg, as I drove my bayonet right through the man in front of me. I confess I shut my eyes, for I just got a glimpse of the poor wretch as he fell back, his eyes

starting out of his head, and, savage though we were, the sight was almost too horrible to look at. But the struggle was over in a second, and we had cleared the ground again right up to the rear hedge of the lane. Had we gone on, I believe we might have recovered the lane too, but we were now all out of order; there was no one to say what to do; the enemy began to line the hedge and open fire, and they were streaming past our left; and how it came about I know not, but we found ourselves falling back towards our right rear, scarce any semblance of a line remaining, and the volunteers who had given way on our left mixed up with us, and adding to the confusion. It was now nearly dark. On the slopes which we were retreating to was a large mass of reserves drawn up in columns. Some of the leading files of these, mistaking us for the enemy, began firing at us; our fellows, crying out to them to stop, ran towards their ranks, and in a few moments the whole slope of the hill became a scene of confusion that I cannot attempt to describe, regiments and detachments mixed up in hopeless disorder. Most of us, I believe, turned towards the enemy and fired away our few remaining cartridges; but it was too late to take aim, fortunately for us, or the guns which the enemy had brought up through the gap, and were firing point-blank, would have done more damage. As it was, we could see little

more than the bright flashes of their fire. In our confusion we had jammed up a line regiment immediately behind us, which I suppose had just arrived on the field, and its colonel and some staff-officers were in vain trying to make a passage for it, and their shouts to us to march to the rear and clear a road could be heard above the roar of the guns and the confused babel of sound. At last a mounted officer pushed his way through, followed by a company in sections, the men brushing past with firm-set faces, as if on a desperate task; and the battalion, when it got clear, appeared to deploy and advance down the slope. I have also a dim recollection of seeing the Life Guards trot past the front, and push on towards the town—a last desperate attempt to save the day—before we left the field. Our adjutant, who had got separated from our flank of the regiment in the confusion, now came up, and managed to lead us, or at any rate some of us, up to the crest of the hill in the rear, to re-form, as he said; but there we met a vast crowd of volunteers, militia, and waggons, all hurrying rearward from the direction of the big house, and we were borne in the stream for a mile at least before it was possible to stop. At last the adjutant led us to an open space a little off the line of fugitives, and there we re-formed the remains of the companies. Telling us to halt, he rode off to try and obtain orders, and find out where the rest

of our brigade was. From this point, a spur of high ground running off from the main plateau, we looked down through the dim twilight into the battle-field below. Artillery-fire was still going on. We could see the flashes from the guns on both sides, and now and then a stray shell came screaming up and burst near us, but we were beyond the sound of musketry. This halt first gave us time to think about what had happened. The long day of expectancy had been succeeded by the excitement of battle; and when each minute may be your last, you do not think much about other people, nor when you are facing another man with a rifle have you time to consider whether he or you are the invader, or that you are fighting for your home and hearths. All fighting is pretty much alike, I suspect, as to sentiment, when once it begins. But now we had time for reflection; and although we did not yet quite understand how far the day had gone against us, an uneasy feeling of self-condemnation must have come up in the minds of most of us; while, above all, we now began to realise what the loss of this battle meant to the country. Then, too, we knew not what had become of all our wounded comrades. Reaction, too, set in after the fatigue and excitement. For myself, I had found out for the first time that besides the bayonet-wound in my leg, a bullet had gone through my left arm, just below

the shoulder, and outside the bone. I remember feeling something like a blow just when we lost the lane, but the wound passed unnoticed till now, when the bleeding had stopped and the shirt was sticking to the wound.

This half-hour seemed an age, and while we stood on this knoll the endless tramp of men and rumbling of carts along the downs beside us told their own tale. The whole army was falling back. At last we could discern the adjutant riding up to us out of the dark. The army was to retreat and take up a position on Epsom Downs, he said; we should join in the march, and try and find our brigade in the morning; and so we turned into the throng again, and made our way on as best we could. A few scraps of news he gave us as he rode alongside of our leading section; the army had held its posision well for a time, but the enemy had at last broken through the line between us and Guildford, as well as in our front, and had poured his men through the point gained, throwing the line into confusion, and the first army-corps near Guildford were also falling back to avoid being outflanked. The regular troops were holding the rear; we were to push on as fast as possible to get out of their way, and allow them to make an orderly retreat in the morning. The gallant old lord commanding our corps had been badly wounded early in the day, he heard, and carried off the field. The

Guards had suffered dreadfully; the household cavalry had ridden down the cuirassiers, but had got into broken ground and been awfully cut up. Such were the scraps of news passed down our weary column. What had become of our wounded no one knew, and no one liked to ask. So we trudged on. It must have been midnight when we reached Leatherhead. Here we left the open ground and took to the road, and the block became greater. We pushed our way painfully along; several trains passed slowly ahead along the railway by the roadside, containing the wounded, we supposed—such of them, at least, as were lucky enough to be picked up. It was daylight when we got to Epsom. The night had been bright and clear after the storm, with a cool air, which, blowing through my soaking clothes, chilled me to the bone. My wounded leg was stiff and sore, and I was ready to drop with exhaustion and hunger. Nor were my comrades in much better case; we had eaten nothing since breakfast the day before, and the bread we had put by had been washed away by the storm: only a little pulp remained at the bottom of my bag. The tobacco was all too wet to smoke. In this plight we were creeping along, when the adjutant guided us into a field by the roadside to rest awhile, and we lay down exhausted on the sloppy grass. The roll was here taken, and only 180 answered out of nearly 500

present on the morning of the battle. How many of these were killed and wounded no one could tell; but it was certain many must have got separated in the confusion of the evening. While resting here, we saw pass by, in the crowd of vehicles and men, a cart laden with commissariat stores, driven by a man in uniform. "Food!" cried some one, and a dozen volunteers jumped up and surrounded the cart. The driver tried to whip them off; but he was pulled off his seat, and the contents of the cart thrown out in an instant. They were preserved meats in tins, which we tore open with our bayonets. The meat had been cooked before, I think; at any rate we devoured it. Shortly after this a general came by with three or four staff-officers. He stopped and spoke to our adjutant, and then rode into the field. "My lads," said he, "you shall join my division for the present: fall in, and follow the regiment that is now passing." We rose up, fell in by companies, each about twenty strong, and turned once more into the stream moving along the road;—regiments, detachments, single volunteers or militiamen, country people making off, some with bundles, some without, a few in carts, but most on foot; here and there waggons of stores, with men sitting wherever there was room, others crammed with wounded soldiers. Many blocks occurred from horses falling, or carts breaking down and filling up the road. In the town the

confusion was even worse, for all the houses seemed full of volunteers and militiamen, wounded or resting, or trying to find food, and the streets were almost choked up. Some officers were in vain trying to restore order, but the task seemed a hopeless one. One or two volunteer regiments which had arrived from the north the previous night, and had been halted here for orders, were drawn up along the roadside steadily enough, and some of the retreating regiments, including ours, may have preserved the semblance of discipline, but for the most part the mass pushing to the rear was a mere mob. The regulars, or what remained of them, were now, I believe, all in the rear, to hold the advancing enemy in check. A few officers among such a crowd could do nothing. To add to the confusion, several houses were being emptied of the wounded brought here the night before, to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy, some in carts, some being carried to the railway by men. The groans of these poor fellows as they were jostled through the street went to our hearts, selfish though fatigue and suffering had made us. At last, following the guidance of a staff-officer who was standing to show the way, we turned off from the main London road and took that towards Kingston. Here the crush was less, and we managed to move along pretty steadily. The air had been cooled by the storm, and there was no dust.

We passed through a village where our new general had seized all the public-houses, and taken possession of the liquor; and each regiment as it came up was halted, and each man got a drink of beer, served out by companies. Whether the owner got paid, I know not, but it was like nectar. It must have been about one o'clock in the afternoon that we came in sight of Kingston. We had been on our legs sixteen hours, and had got over about twelve miles of ground. There is a hill a little south of the Surbiton station, covered then mostly with villas, but open at the western extremity, where there was a clump of trees on the summit. We had diverged from the road towards this, and here the general halted us and disposed the line of the division along his front, facing to the south-west, the right of the line reaching down to the water-works on the Thames, the left extending along the southern slope of the hill, in the direction of the Epsom road by which we had come. We were nearly in the centre, occupying the knoll just in front of the general, who dismounted on the top and tied his horse to a tree. It is not much of a hill, but commands an extensive view over the flat country around; and as we lay wearily on the ground we could see the Thames glistening like a silver field in the bright sunshine, the palace at Hampton Court, the bridge at Kingston, and the old church tower rising above the haze of the town,

with the woods of Richmond Park behind it. To most of us the scene could not but call up the associations of happy days of peace—days now ended and peace destroyed through national infatuation. We did not say this to each other, but a deep depression had come upon us, partly due to weakness and fatigue, no doubt, but we saw that another stand was going to be made, and we had no longer any confidence in ourselves. If we could not hold our own when stationary in line, on a good position, but had been broken up into a rabble at the first shock, what chance had we now of manœuvring against a victorious enemy in this open ground? A feeling of desperation came over us, a determination to struggle on against hope; but anxiety for the future of the country, and our friends, and all dear to us, filled our thoughts now that we had time for reflection. We had had no news of any kind since Wood joined us the day before—we knew not what was doing in London, or what the Government was about, or anything else; and exhausted though we were, we felt an intense craving to know what was happening in other parts of the country.

Our general had expected to find a supply of food and ammunition here, but nothing turned up. Most of us had hardly a cartridge left, so he ordered the regiment next to us, which came from the north and had not been engaged, to give us enough

to make up twenty rounds a man, and he sent off a fatigue-party to Kingston to try and get provisions, while a detachment of our fellows was allowed to go foraging among the villas in our rear; and in about an hour they brought back some bread and meat, which gave us a slender meal all round. They said most of the houses were empty, and that many had been stripped of all eatables, and a good deal damaged already.

It must have been between three and four o'clock when the sound of cannonading began to be heard in the front, and we could see the smoke of the guns rising above the woods of Esher and Claremont, and soon afterwards some troops emerged from the fields below us. It was the rear-guard of regular troops. There were some guns also, which were driven up the slope and took up their position round the knoll. There were three batteries, but they only counted eight guns amongst them. Behind them was posted the line; it was a brigade apparently of four regiments, but the whole did not look to be more than eight or nine hundred men. Our regiment and another had been moved a little to the rear to make way for them, and presently we were ordered down to occupy the railway station on our right rear. My leg was now so stiff I could no longer march with the rest, and my left arm was very swollen and sore, and almost useless; but anything seemed better than being left behind,

so I limped after the battalion as best I could down to the station. There was a goods shed a little in advance of it down the line, a strong brick building, and here my company was posted. The rest of our men lined the wall of the enclosure. A staff-officer came with us to arrange the distribution: we should be supported by line troops, he said; and in a few minutes a train full of them came slowly up from Guildford way. It was the last; the men got out, the train passed on, and a party began to tear up the rails, while the rest were distributed among the houses on each side. A sergeant's party joined us in our shed, and an engineer officer with sappers came to knock holes in the walls for us to fire from; but there were only half-a-dozen of them, so progress was not rapid, and as we had no tools we could not help.

It was while we were watching this job that the adjutant, who was as active as ever, looked in, and told us to muster in the yard. The fatigue-party had come back from Kingston, and a small baker's hand-cart of food was made over to us as our share. It contained loaves, flour, and some joints of meat. The meat and the flour we had not time or means to cook. The loaves we devoured; and there was a tap of water in the yard, so we felt refreshed by the meal. I should have liked to wash my wounds, which were becoming very offensive, but I dared not take off my coat, feeling sure I should not be

able to get it on again. It was while we were eating our bread that the rumour first reached us of another disaster, even greater than that we had witnessed ourselves. Whence it came I know not; but a whisper went down the ranks that Woolwich had been captured. We all knew that it was our only arsenal, and understood the significance of the blow. No hope, if this were true, of saving the country. Thinking over this, we went back to the shed.

Although this was only our second day of war, I think we were already old soldiers so far that we had come to be careless about fire, and the shot and shell that now began to open on us made no sensation. We felt, indeed, our need of discipline, and we saw plainly enough the slender chance of success coming out of troops so imperfectly trained as we were; but I think we were all determined to fight on as long as we could. Our gallant adjutant gave his spirit to everybody; and the staff-officer commanding was a very cheery fellow, and went about as if we were certain of victory. Just as the firing began he looked in to say that we were as safe as in a church, that we must be sure and pepper the enemy well, and that more cartridges would soon arrive. There were some steps and benches in the shed, and on these a part of our men were standing, to fire through the upper loop-holes, while the line soldiers and others stood on the

ground, guarding the second row. I sat on the floor, for I could not now use my rifle, and besides, there were more men than loop-holes. The artillery fire which had opened now on our position was from a longish range; and occupation for the riflemen had hardly begun when there was a crash in the shed, and I was knocked down by a blow on the head. I was almost stunned for a time, and could not make out at first what had happened. A shot or shell had hit the shed without quite penetrating the wall, but the blow had upset the steps resting against it, and the men standing on them, bringing down a cloud of plaster and brickbats, one of which had struck me. I felt now past being of use. I could not use my rifle, and could barely stand; and after a time I thought I would make for my own house, on the chance of finding some one still there. I got up therefore, and staggered homewards. Musketry fire had now commenced, and our side were blazing away from the windows of the houses, and from behind walls, and from the shelter of some trucks still standing in the station. A couple of field-pieces in the yard were firing, and in the open space in rear of the station a reserve was drawn up. There, too, was the staff-officer on horseback, watching the fight through his field-glass. I remember having still enough sense to feel that the position was a hopeless one. That straggling line of houses and gardens would surely

be broken through at some point, and then the line must give way like a rope of sand. It was about a mile to our house, and I was thinking how I could possibly drag myself so far when I suddenly recollected that I was passing Travers's house,—one of the first of a row of villas then leading from the Surbiton station to Kingston. Had he been brought home, I wonder, as his faithful old servant promised, and was his wife still here? I remember to this day the sensation of shame I felt, when I recollected that I had not once given him—my greatest friend—a thought since I carried him off the field the day before. But war and suffering make men selfish. I would go in now at any rate and rest awhile, and see if I could be of use. The little garden before the house was as trim as ever—I used to pass it every day on my way to the train, and knew every shrub in it — and ablaze with flowers, but the hall-door stood ajar. I stepped in and saw little Arthur standing in the hall. He had been dressed as neatly as ever that day, and as he stood there in his pretty blue frock and white trousers and socks showing his chubby little legs, with his golden locks, fair face, and large dark eyes, the picture of childish beauty, in the quiet hall, just as it used to look—the vases of flowers, the hat and coats hanging up, the familiar pictures on the walls —this vision of peace in the midst of war made me wonder for a moment, faint and giddy as I was, if

the pandemonium outside had any real existence, and was not merely a hideous dream. But the roar of the guns making the house shake, and the rushing of the shot, gave a ready answer. The little fellow appeared almost unconscious of the scene around him, and was walking up the stairs holding by the railing, one step at a time, as I had seen him do a hundred times before, but turned round as I came in. My appearance frightened him, and staggering as I did into the hall, my face and clothes covered with blood and dirt, I must have looked an awful object to the child, for he gave a cry and turned to run toward the basement stairs. But he stopped on hearing my voice calling him back to his god-papa, and after a while came timidly up to me. Papa had been to the battle, he said, and was very ill: mamma was with papa: Wood was out: Lucy was in the cellar, and had taken him there, but he wanted to go to mamma. Telling him to stay in the hall for a minute till I called him, I climbed up-stairs and opened the bedroom-door. My poor friend lay there, his body resting on the bed, his head supported on his wife's shoulder as she sat by the bedside. He breathed heavily, but the pallor of his face, the closed eyes, the prostrate arms, the clammy foam she was wiping from his mouth, all spoke of approaching death. The good old servant had done his duty, at least,—he had brought his master home to die in his wife's

arms. The poor woman was too intent on her charge to notice the opening of the door, and as the child would be better away, I closed it gently and went down to the hall to take little Arthur to the shelter below, where the maid was hiding. Too late! He lay at the foot of the stairs on his face, his little arms stretched out, his hair dabbled in blood. I had not noticed the crash among the other noises, but a splinter of a shell must have come through the open doorway; it had carried away the back of his head. The poor child's death must have been instantaneous. I tried to lift up the little corpse with my one arm, but even this load was too much for me, and while stooping down I fainted away.

When I came to my senses again it was quite dark, and for some time I could not make out where I was; I lay indeed for some time like one half asleep, feeling no inclination to move. By degrees I became aware that I was on the carpeted floor of a room. All noise of battle had ceased, but there was a sound as of many people close by. At last I sat up and gradually got to my feet. The movement gave me intense pain, for my wounds were now highly inflamed, and my clothes sticking to them made them dreadfully sore. At last I got up and groped my way to the door, and opening it at once saw where I was, for the pain had brought back my senses. I had been lying in Travers's

little writing-room at the end of the passage, into which I made my way. There was no gas, and the drawing-room door was closed; but from the open dining-room the glimmer of a candle feebly lighted up the hall, in which half-a-dozen sleeping figures could be discerned, while the room itself was crowded with men. The table was covered with plates, glasses, and bottles; but most of the men were asleep in the chairs or on the floor, a few were smoking cigars, and one or two with their helmets on were still engaged at supper, occasionally grunting out an observation between the mouthfuls.

"Sind wackere Soldaten, diese Englischen Freiwilligen," said a broad-shouldered brute, stuffing a great hunch of beef into his mouth with a silver fork, an implement I should think he must have been using for the first time in his life.

"Ja, ja," replied a comrade, who was lolling back in his chair with a pair of very dirty legs on the table, and one of poor Travers's best cigars in his mouth; "Sie so gut laufen können."

"Ja wohl," responded the first speaker; "aber sind nicht eben so schnell wie die Französischen Mobloten."

"Gewiss," grunted a hulking lout from the floor, leaning on his elbow, and sending out a cloud of smoke from his ugly jaws; "und da sind hier etwa gute Schützen."

"Hast recht, lange Peter," answered number one; "wenn die Schurken so gut exerciren wie schützen könnten, so wären wir heute nicht hier!"

"Recht! recht!" said the second; "das exerciren macht den guten Soldaten."

What more criticisms on the shortcomings of our unfortunate volunteers might have passed I did not stop to hear, being interrupted by a sound on the stairs. Mrs Travers was standing on the landing-place; I limped up the stairs to meet her. Among the many pictures of those fatal days engraven on my memory, I remember none more clearly than the mournful aspect of my poor friend, widowed and childless within a few moments, as she stood there in her white dress, coming forth like a ghost from the chamber of the dead, the candle she held lighting up her face, and contrasting its pallor with the dark hair that fell disordered round it, its beauty radiant even through features worn with fatigue and sorrow. She was calm and even tearless, though the trembling lip told of the effort to restrain the emotion she felt. "Dear friend," she said, taking my hand, "I was coming to seek you; forgive my selfishness in neglecting you so long; but you will understand"—glancing at the door above—"how occupied I have been." "Where," I began, "is" ——"my boy?" she answered, anticipating my question. "I have laid him by his father. But now your wounds must be cared for; how pale

and faint you look!—rest here a moment,"—and, descending to the dining-room, she returned with some wine, which I gratefully drank, and then, making me sit down on the top step of the stairs, she brought water and linen, and, cutting off the sleeve of my coat, bathed and bandaged my wounds. 'Twas I who felt selfish for thus adding to her troubles; but in truth I was too weak to have much will left, and stood in need of the help which she forced me to accept; and the dressing of my wounds afforded indescribable relief. While thus tending me, she explained in broken sentences how matters stood. Every room but her own, and the little parlour into which with Wood's help she had carried me, was full of soldiers. Wood had been taken away to work at repairing the railroad, and Lucy had run off from fright; but the cook had stopped at her post, and had served up supper and opened the cellar for the soldiers' use: she herself did not understand what they said, and they were rough and boorish, but not uncivil. I should now go, she said, when my wounds were dressed, to look after my own home, where I might be wanted; for herself, she wished only to be allowed to remain watching there—glancing at the room where lay the bodies of her husband and child—where she would not be molested. I felt that her advice was good. I could be of no use as protection, and I had an anxious longing to know what had become of my

sick mother and sister; besides, some arrangement must be made for the burial. I therefore limped away. There was no need to express thanks on either side, and the grief was too deep to be reached by any outward show of sympathy.

Outside the house there was a good deal of movement and bustle; many carts going along, the waggoners, from Sussex and Surrey, evidently impressed and guarded by soldiers; and although no gas was burning, the road towards Kingston was well lighted by torches held by persons standing at short intervals in line, who had been seized for the duty, some of them the tenants of neighbouring villas. Almost the first of these torch-bearers I came to was an old gentleman whose face I was well acquainted with, from having frequently travelled up and down in the same train with him. He was a senior clerk in a Government office, I believe, and was a mild-looking old man with a prim face and a long neck, which he used to wrap in a white double neckcloth, a thing even in those days seldom seen. Even in that moment of bitterness I could not help being amused by the absurd figure this poor old fellow presented, with his solemn face and long cravat doing penance with a torch in front of his own gate, to light up the path of our conquerors. But a more serious object now presented itself, a corporal's guard passing by, with two English volunteers in charge, their hands tied behind their backs.

They cast an imploring glance at me, and I stepped into the road to ask the corporal what was the matter, and even ventured, as he was passing on, to lay my hand on his sleeve. "Auf dem Wege, Spitzbube!" cried the brute, lifting his rifle as if to knock me down. "Must one prisoners who fire at us let shoot," he went on to add; and shot the poor fellows would have been, I suppose, if I had not interceded with an officer, who happened to be riding by. "Herr Hauptmann," I cried, as loud as I could, "is this your discipline, to let unarmed prisoners be shot without orders?" The officer, thus appealed to, reined in his horse, and halted the guard till he heard what I had to say. My knowledge of other languages here stood me in good stead, for the prisoners, north-country factory hands apparently, were of course utterly unable to make themselves understood, and did not even know in what they had offended. I therefore interpreted their explanation: they had been left behind while skirmishing near Ditton, in a barn, and coming out of their hiding-place in the midst of a party of the enemy, with their rifles in their hands, the latter thought they were going to fire at them from behind. It was a wonder they were not shot down on the spot. The captain heard the tale, and then told the guard to let them go, and they slunk off at once into a by-road. He was a fine soldier-like man, but nothing could exceed the insolence of his

manner, which was perhaps all the greater because it seemed not intentional, but to arise from a sense of immeasurable superiority. Between the lame *freiwilliger* pleading for his comrades, and the captain of the conquering army, there was, in his view, an infinite gulf. Had the two men been dogs, their fate could not have been decided more contemptuously. They were let go simply because they were not worth keeping as prisoners, and perhaps to kill any living thing without cause went against the *hauptmann's* sense of justice. But why speak of this insult in particular? Had not every man who lived then his tale to tell of humiliation and degradation? For it was the same story everywhere. After the first stand in line, and when once they had got us on the march, the enemy laughed at us. Our handful of regular troops was sacrificed almost to a man in a vain conflict with numbers; our volunteers and militia, with officers who did not know their work, without ammunition or equipment, or staff to superintend, starving in the midst of plenty, we had soon become a helpless mob, fighting desperately here and there, but with whom, as a manœuvring army, the disciplined invaders did just what they pleased. Happy those whose bones whitened the fields of Surrey; they at least were spared the disgrace we lived to endure. Even you, who have never known what it is to live otherwise than on sufferance, even your cheeks burn

when we talk of these days; think, then, what those endured who, like your grandfather, had been citizens of the proudest nation on earth, which had never known disgrace or defeat, and whose boast it used to be that they bore a flag on which the sun never set! We had heard of generosity in war; we found none: the war was made by us, it was said, and we must take the consequences. London and our only arsenal captured, we were at the mercy of our captors, and right heavily did they tread on our necks. Need I tell you the rest?—of the ransom we had to pay, and the taxes raised to cover it, which keep us paupers to this day?—the brutal frankness that announced we must give place to a new naval Power, and be made harmless for revenge?—the victorious troops living at free quarters, the yoke they put on us made the more galling that their requisitions had a semblance of method and legality? Better have been robbed at first hand by the soldiery themselves, than through our own magistrates made the instruments for extortion. How we lived through the degradation we daily and hourly underwent, I hardly even now understand. And what was there left to us to live for? Stripped of our colonies; Canada and the West Indies gone to America; Australia forced to separate; India lost for ever, after the English there had all been destroyed, vainly trying to hold the country when cut off from aid by their countrymen;

Gibraltar and Malta ceded to the new naval Power; Ireland independent and in perpetual anarchy and revolution. When I look at my country as it is now—its trade gone, its factories silent, its harbours empty, a prey to pauperism and decay—when I see all this, and think what Great Britain was in my youth, I ask myself whether I have really a heart or any sense of patriotism that I should have witnessed such degradation and still care to live! France was different. There, too, they had to eat the bread of tribulation under the yoke of the conqueror! their fall was hardly more sudden or violent than ours; but war could not take away their rich soil; they had no colonies to lose; their broad lands, which made their wealth, remained to them; and they rose again from the blow. But our people could not be got to see how artificial our prosperity was—that it all rested on foreign trade and financial credit; that the course of trade once turned away from us, even for a time, it might never return; and that our credit once shaken might never be restored. To hear men talk in those days, you would have thought that Providence had ordained that our Government should always borrow at three per cent, and that trade came to us because we lived in a foggy little island set in a boisterous sea. They could not be got to see that the wealth heaped up on every side was not created in the country, but in India and

China, and other parts of the world; and that it would be quite possible for the people who made money by buying and selling the natural treasures of the earth, to go and live in other places, and take their profits with them. Nor would men believe that there could ever be an end to our coal and iron, or that they would get to be so much dearer than the coal and iron of America that it would no longer be worth while to work them, and that therefore we ought to insure against the loss of our artificial position as the great centre of trade, by making ourselves secure and strong and respected. We thought we were living in a commercial millennium, which must last for a thousand years at least. After all, the bitterest part of our reflection is, that all this misery and decay might have been so easily prevented, and that we brought it about ourselves by our own shortsighted recklessness. There, across the narrow Straits, was the writing on the wall, but we would not choose to read it. The warnings of the few were drowned in the voice of the multitude. Power was then passing away from the class which had been used to rule, and to face political dangers, and which had brought the nation with honour unsullied through former struggles, into the hands of the lower classes, uneducated, untrained to the use of political rights, and swayed by demagogues; and the few who were wise in their generation were denounced as alarm-

ists, or as aristocrats who sought their own aggrandisement by wasting public money on bloated armaments. The rich were idle and luxurious; the poor grudged the cost of defence. Politics had become a mere bidding for Radical votes, and those who should have led the nation stooped rather to pander to the selfishness of the day, and humoured the popular cry which denounced those who would secure the defence of the nation by enforced arming of its manhood, as interfering with the liberties of the people. Truly the nation was ripe for a fall; but when I reflect how a little firmness and self-denial, or political courage and foresight, might have averted the disaster, I feel that the judgment must have really been deserved. A nation too selfish to defend its liberty, could not have been fit to retain it. To you, my grandchildren, who are now going to seek a new home in a more prosperous land, let not this bitter lesson be lost upon you in the country of your adoption. For me, I am too old to begin life again in a strange country; and hard and evil as have been my days, it is not much to await in solitude the time which cannot now be far off, when my old bones will be laid to rest in the soil I have loved so well, and whose happiness and honour I have so long survived.

LATE FOR THE TRAIN.

[*MAGA.* JUNE 1869.]

I.

IT was dead low-water at Wanslip Road Station. The tide of trains, express, ordinary, and goods, which dashed by between the hours of 8 and 10 A.M. (for but few of them stopped at that small roadside halting-place) had run out, and for the last three-quarters of an hour the precincts had been as silent and undisturbed as the aisles of an old-fashioned church on a week-day. Mr Morgan—book-keeper, clerk, and superintendent, all in one—was immersed in a study of long ledgers, which seem to have been invented to keep the minds of the officials in such places from stagnating. Jem Dobbs, the sole porter, and pointsman on duty, was occupying the horsehair seat invented by the company for the punishment of their passengers, sunk in that professional half-slumber which has still an

eye and an ear open for any sounds of business. Seeing that he was on duty for an average fourteen hours a-day, it was very well for him that he had acquired something of the faculty ascribed to great military commanders, of snatching an odd ten minutes of sleep whenever the movements of the enemy—in his case the "ups" and "downs"—would let him.

Suddenly Dobbs jumped up, and was out on the platform in a second. The distant rumble of the up-train from E—— for London had mingled with his blissful dream of the tap of the "Railway Hotel," and roused him to his duty of bell-ringing. Mr Morgan had not heard the sound, apparently, though he was wide awake. But then it was not his special business.

"She's before her time this morning, Jem," said he to his subordinate when he re-entered, casting a look at the office clock as he spoke.

"It's Buster as is driving," said Jem; "he's allus either afore his time or arter; he were brought up on the Westland Junction, where they does all their work on their own premises, and the platelayers makes the chronometers."

"Ye're early to-day, Joe," remarked the porter, as the engine drew up at the platform.

"Well, I were late yesterday," replied Joe, with an air of entire self-satisfaction.

"You goes on the system of averages on the

Junction, I suppose; we an't got to that pint yet on the main line. Well, you've got to wait, you know—two minutes and a half."

There was but one passenger for Wanslip, and as he was a second-class, and appeared to have but a single carpet-bag, Jem Dobbs shrewdly calculated that he was quite equal to the weight of that himself, and resumed his own talk with the driver.

"Here's to-day's 'Telegraph' for you, Jem,—I suppose you han't seed it?" Coming from the rural metropolis of E——, the speaker was in a position to confer this kind of literary obligations on his friends at the smaller stations.

"I don't care for no Telegraphs," said the other, moodily. Indeed the newspaper, having passed through the hands of the driver and his mate during their half-hour of refreshment at E——, was not a tempting-looking object except to a very earnest politician. Jem held out his hand for it nevertheless. "I don't want no papers. What's the use of a newspaper to a man as is nailed to this 'ere platform fourteen hours out of every twenty-four? What odds can it make to him about politics? Lots of talking in Parlyment," he continued, glancing with an air of disgust either at the long speeches or at the dirty pages. "Ah! I dessay! much good they does a-talking."

"There's all about the Hirish Church."

"Bother the Hirish Church! What harm did

the Hirish Church ever do me or you? If they'd take off the Hirish Mail, now, as keeps me out of my bed till one in the morning every other night, kicking my heels in this here solumtary hole, I'd say they did some good. I'm turned Tory, Joe, I am. I don't admire so much progress; it drives a man off his legs, and wellnigh off his head too. You've heared of this Hact as this new Company's got passed?"

"The Milford and Ashwater? They're to have running powers over this line, I'm told."

"Ay—and we shall have lots more work here a-signalling, and no more pay, I'll be bound, for it. Running powers! I wish I'd my foot behind some of them directors, Joe, I'd give 'em some running powers—bless'd if I wouldn't."

"Time's up," said the station-master, issuing forth watch in hand. There was the usual whistle and shriek, and with a slow lumbering motion and much panting, like an unwilling monster, the train began its work again.

"Hold on there! hold on!" shouted the official suddenly, when they had scarcely yet got well under way. "Here's Sir Francis coming down the hill," said he to the porter. "Hold on!"

"Hold on!" echoed Dobbs, frantically rushing to the end of the platform, and raising both arms with the due telegraphic motion. Glancing round, he saw the dog-cart rapidly nearing the station,

with the driver's arm raised in correspondence. Quickened by the thought of a possible shilling, he ran some fifty yards along the line, still shouting and gesticulating after the fast-retreating train. But the wind was contrary, and Buster did not, and the guard would not hear; and Jem returned panting to the platform to see Sir Francis jump down at the station-door—just one half-minute too late.

"How's this, Morgan?" said he, as the station-master came forward to express his regret. "Why, they're off before their time!"

"I think not, Sir Francis," said Mr Morgan respectfully, glancing up at his clock. The baronet drew out his own watch, but it more than confirmed the station-master. He was evidently a good deal annoyed, but he was too much of a gentleman to blame others for punctuality.

"By Jove, Lizzy! we're too late, after all," he said in a tone of vexation to a young lady who had accompanied him, as he went to help her down.

"How very provoking!"

"I've been here fifty times to meet this train, and never knew you all so sharp in my life before," said he, with an attempt to smile.

"Quite true, Sir Francis,—it is very seldom we are so exact to time: the train came in early, and had to wait a minute or two, but there was no one here, you see, and so——"

"Of course, of course, Morgan. There's no one to blame but myself; but it's very annoying to miss it by so little. I had an engagement I wished especially to keep to-day."

"I'm very sorry, I'm sure, Sir Francis," said the station-master, with a manner as if he meant what he said: for Sir Francis Hargrave, if not exactly popular, was generally respected in the neighbourhood, and had even once or twice sent Mr Morgan a little present of game in acknowledgment of polite services in his department. But in the midst of explanations and apologies the station-door opened, and another would-be passenger appeared. It was a young man in the dress of a superior mechanic, carrying a small bundle.

"Train gone?" said he, almost breathless.

"*Just* gone," said Jem, with an emphasis on the first word, as though he congratulated himself and his questioner on having timed it so nicely. There was no malice, but only a general sort of civil misanthropy on the porter's part towards the general public. He saw a good deal of the weaker side of human nature. People were so stupid: coming late for trains, as if it was not quite as easy for those who had all the day before them to be ten minutes beforehand as two minutes behind (he should like to know what the company would say to him if he was two minutes late to signal in the half-past five train these blessed winter mornings);

bringing luggage with illegible addresses, or no address at all; expecting it to go all right, even under the latter conditions; or, in cases where it was legibly directed, duly labelled, and put out on the platform, hovering over it to his, Jem Dobbs's, personal inconvenience (these were commonly lady-passengers), in the evident belief that the company would make away with it, leave it behind, or otherwise unlawfully dispose of it, if they were allowed the slightest chance. Then people asked such utterly needless and unreasonable questions; expecting him to know, and to be able to explain to the dullest comprehension the time-tables, not only of his own line, but of every line in or out of connection with it: to be able to give an exact guess, if a train were late in arrival, as to "how much longer" it would be; and, to crown their aggravations, standing at the carriage-doors when the train was just starting, to give some parting message that might just as well have been given ten minutes before, or insisting on kissing each other on tiptoe through the window.

"Gone!" echoed the young man, with a face of consternation—"why——"

He turned round to face a slight girlish figure that had entered close behind him.

"We're too late," he said,—"too late!"

"When does the next train go for London, sir?" asked the girl timidly of Mr Morgan. There was

great anxiety in her face, but she seemed the more business-like of the two.

"There's none till 1.25," said the station-master; "you'll have an hour and a half to wait."

"Have you a telegraph here?" interjected the young man rapidly.

"Telegraph? no," said Jem, in a tone which implied that things were not come to that pass of aggravation yet at Wanslip Road.

The girl meanwhile was studying the time-table, running her finger nervously along the lines.

"The express does not stop here," she said. "How far is it to Croxton, sir? it stops there. Is there any conveyance to be had that would take us on there in time?"

The young man caught at the idea eagerly.

"Yes," said he, "a fly, or gig, or anything—it is worth trying." And he began to count the coins in a purse which did not seem over-well filled.

But no conveyance of any kind was to be had at the "Station Hotel," unless by previous order from the little town of Wanslip, which was two miles off.

"It's no use—it's no use," said the disappointed traveller, trying hard to suppress evident emotion, as he walked out upon the platform, where the girl quickly followed him.

There had been another more interested spectator of the scene than either of the railway officials. The young lady who had accompanied Sir Francis had

marked with a woman's sympathy the look of distress in the face of the girl (who might have been a year or two younger than herself), and was now engaged in an earnest whisper with her brother—for such was the relationship between them.

The baronet turned round sharply. "Very well," said he. And he stepped out upon the platform where the other two were walking,—the girl clinging to her companion's arm, and looking up pitifully into his moody face. Sir Francis touched him lightly on the shoulder.

"Is it really important to you, young man, to catch this express for London?"

"Oh yes, sir, yes!" said the girl, answering for him, as he turned round to his questioner with a somewhat bewildered and half-resentful expression. There was nothing to resent, however, in Sir Francis's manner, though it was more business-like than sympathetic. Time and words were precious.

"Jump into my dog-cart, then, here at the door, and my groom will get you to Croxton in time. Look sharp, Johnson!"

The porter caught the baronet's decided tone, and the groom, who was walking the mare about, was summoned to the door again before the young man could half understand the offer, or express his thanks.

"Do you go with him?" said Jem to the girl, as

she handed up the little bundle to her companion already seated by the groom's side.

"No, oh no!" said she; "make haste!"

Sir Francis stood at the door looking after the dog-cart for a minute or so, as it drove rapidly off. He had his watch in his hand.

"She'll do it in the time, Morgan," he remarked, as they turned a corner out of sight. He was more interested in his mare's powers than in the emergencies of a stranger.

"Oh, will they, sir, do you think?" said the young girl to him appealingly. Her eyes were straining after them too.

"Yes, yes; they're safe to do it," said the baronet, looking at her with some curiosity. He was half-amused and half-embarrassed by her earnestness. He was not much accustomed to these appeals from "young persons" in her station of life. But she had a very beautiful face, he saw now; and he had an artist's eye for faces.

"Yes, he'll be in time, my—good girl." He had almost said, "my dear;" but with a happy presence of mind he corrected himself. Then he walked back into the station to get out of the way of her thanks; for he saw tears in her eyes, and he did not care to see a woman cry—even a plebeian. Neither, to do him justice, was he a man to desire such impassioned thanks for a mere good-natured action. He had done it to oblige his sister; but when he saw how

pretty this other girl was, he felt very well satisfied that he had done her a kindness too.

"And what are you going to do yourself, Sir Francis?" asked Mr Morgan.

"Oh! I should have had to wait here, I suppose, anyhow, for the 1.25 train. We're going to Moulsford, and the express wouldn't help us—don't stop there, you know. You won't mind waiting here, Lizzy? It's a great nuisance—I shall be late for that meeting; but, you see, Vernon will expect us to dinner all the same. I think we ought not to disappoint them. I'll just take a stroll about and smoke a cigar. Have you a book?"

She shook her head. "I shall do very well—don't mind me, pray."

"And I must have left the 'Times' in the dog-cart. How stupid of me!"

"Here's to-day's 'Telegraph,' miss," said Jem, producing the paper from the office window. "It an't justly fit for a lady's hands, but it's only the ingin black—perhaps if you was to take your gloves off, it wouldn't hurt." Jem had an idea that the little hands would wash, but the lilac kids certainly would not.

"Oh, thank you! never mind. Now, you see, Francis, I'm quite provided."

"Well, Mr Morgan will take care of you, and I'll look in." He lighted his cigar, and was going out at the door opposite the platform. The girl who

had accompanied the young traveller was still waiting in the office.

"She wants to thank you, Sir Francis," said the station-master, to whom she had been speaking. She came forward a step or two, but still seemed too shy to address him.

He turned to her good-humouredly. "Oh! it's not worth mentioning—it will do the mare good." It was wonderful what an expressive face this young person had—and there were tears in her eyes. "Don't say a word," he said, in a very kind tone; "good-bye." It was not at all his habit to say good-bye to 'young persons' he encountered on railways.

At this moment a whistling scream was heard in the distance, and Jem Dobbs rushed frantically across the office, and out upon the platform.

"Only the down express, Sir Francis," said Morgan, in explanation.

What is the strange attraction which draws every one to see an express go by? It was a question which Jem Dobbs would have felt much relieved to have got answered satisfactorily. Why should he continually have not only to shout and warn and remonstrate, but to rush along the edge of the platform at his own personal risk, and push back the curious fools, young and old, who seemed to be always trying how near they could stand without the train touching them?

It was no wonder that the girl, to whom railway travelling was a novelty, should go to the door to look. Even the more aristocratic young lady was standing in the office window, and Sir Francis himself turned and went out to see. Certainly he had the excuse of having nothing better to do at the moment.

"Take care there!" shouted Jem from the points, which he had gone to attend to.

"Take care," said the baronet. But she was careful enough. Sir Francis did not seem to be so very much interested in the passage of the express, after all, for he turned his back to it as it came roaring up; it gave him the opportunity, at all events, of looking into her face again without rudeness, as she stood absorbed in watching its rapid approach. He dropped his cigar as he turned, and reached to pick it up almost at her feet. There was an iron clamp on the platform, fastening together two flag-stones which were somewhat worn. More than once Mr Morgan had written to headquarters to advise their removal as dangerous. The baronet's heel tripped on this as he recovered his cigar, and he staggered backwards right on the edge of the platform as the train came rushing up. Instinctively he put out his hand, and the girl clasped it. He was quite off his balance, and the strain was almost too much for her. There was a loud scream—from the window, not from her—as

for one terrible instant the two swung together almost over the platform, so that the hindmost carriages brushed the person of Sir Francis as they flew past. The girl held on bravely, though she was dragged a step or two from her position. The station-master had rushed forward the moment he saw the peril; but the whole scene passed instantaneously, and by the time he had grasped the girl's dress with one hand the train had passed, the danger was over, and she had fainted and fallen on the rails. The fall was in a measure broken by the station-master's grasp; but when Sir Francis, who had recovered himself, by a spring forward, stooped to assist her, the blood was trickling from her forehead, and she neither moved nor spoke. She had struck her head against the rail.

"Good heavens! is she killed?" said he, in an agony.

Mr Morgan was calmer. "Only stunned and faint, sir, I think; she did not fall heavily—I had good hold of her."

The two men lifted her carefully into the office, and laid her on the horsehair bench, which had never been found so convenient. The cut was not severe, so far as they could judge.

"Send at once for the nearest surgeon," said the baronet.

"I fear neither of us can be spared here," said the station-master; "but I'll step across to the

hotel, and get some one from there to run up to Wanslip."

"I'll go myself," said the baronet; "Lizzy, you see to her—get some water."

"Yes, yes," said his sister, "go at once; there's not much harm done, I hope.'

There came a sigh from the patient as she spoke, which the experience of Mr Morgan pronounced an excellent sign. He was so far right, that before Sir Francis had been gone many minutes, the colour had partially come back into her face, and she had once or twice opened her eyes. The landlady of the little public-house close by—dignified by the name of "hotel"—came in, and though a vulgar fussy woman, she was some help to the others under the circumstances. She was anxious to have the patient carried over to her parlour, but this the station-master did not advise. "It's a noisy place, miss," he said, in an aside; "she'll be better taken up to Wanslip, after the doctor has been."

"Who is she, Mr Morgan? Do you know at all?" asked the young lady.

Mr Morgan had no idea. Jem had no idea. He had seen the young man once or twice, he thought, about Wanslip lately, but he was a stranger to the place.

There was consciousness in the eyes the next time they were opened, and they looked round with a mute and questioning distress at all the strange

faces. Miss Hargrave signed to Mr Morgan and Jem, who were hovering about and looking on with the kindly but troublesome helplessness common to their sex in such emergencies, to go out of the way. "We shall manage very well now," she said to them. "You are to lie still, dear, and be quiet; you've hurt yourself."

Apparently the sufferer gained confidence by what she saw in the gentle face which bent over her. She shut her eyes again, and lay quite still for some minutes. Then she looked up again and asked—"Where is my brother?"

"He is gone to London, you know, dear, and I'm to take care of you till he comes back."

"Oh! I remember," said the girl, with a look of pained anxiety. "Can I go home now—to Wanslip, I mean? I think I could go now," she said, half raising herself.

"We've sent for something to take you there—it will be here very soon," said Lizzy, with pious falsehood. "You're to be very quiet till it comes. You have had a fall, but you'll be yourself again in a very little while."

"I know—I know," said the girl. "Was he hurt?"

"My brother, do you mean? Oh no; it was you that fell—and you saved his life, I do believe. But you must not talk."

"Tell me the gentleman's name—I asked the clerk, but I was not sure what he said."

"Hargrave—but never mind."

"Sir Francis Hargrave?"

Lizzy nodded, as much as to decline talk.

"Are you his sister?" said the girl, springing half up, and looking wild enough, for her hair had come all loose while they were bathing her temples.

"Yes—but I'll tell you nothing if you won't lie still."

"Oh!" said the other, "forgive me! do forgive me! Oh, if I had but known! don't think hard of me!" Her pleading was piteous. She was wandering, no doubt, and Miss Hargrave was seriously alarmed. But she was a sensible girl, and kept her presence of mind.

"I'll go away," said she, stoutly, "if you *will* talk."

"Say only you'll forgive me, whatever comes of it!" said the sufferer, seizing her hand. But there was a hazy look about the eyes, and her voice grew weaker. Lizzy Hargrave promised forgiveness lavishly, and succeeded at last in calming her patient so far that she lay down again, still holding the hand she had taken.

She lay quiet after this, and sank into a doze. Miss Hargrave sat and watched her, waiting anxiously for her brother's return with the surgeon. He was longer than she had hoped. But the patient was now breathing easily, and the doze seemed to have become a sound sleep, for

the tightly-clasped hand was relaxed, and at last withdrawn altogether. She picked up Jem's 'Telegraph,' which had dropped on the floor, and glanced over its pages. There was not much in it to interest her, and she began mechanically, as people will do in such cases, to read some of the advertisements. At last she was struck by one in which a familiar name appeared.

"One Hundred Pounds Reward. Wanted, evi-
" dence of the marriage of Richard Hargrave with
" Mary Gordon, in or about the year 18—. The
" marriage took place in Australia—probably at
" Ballarat. The name of one of the witnesses is
" supposed to have been John Somers, who came
" from the neighbourhood of Wanslip, in Essex.
" Apply to R. H., 15 Crown Court, Clifford's Inn."

The coincidence of names was at least curious, and she read it over more than once. A start from the sleeper, however, led her to drop the paper hastily, lest its rustle should disturb what she hoped might prove the best restorative.

The surgeon had not been easily found; but Sir Francis brought him at last, as fast as his horse and "trap" could carry him. He would not pronounce a very confident opinion as to the amount of injury his patient had sustained. The cut was nothing, and there was no external mischief. The

symptoms which he did not like were the outburst of wandering excitement of which Miss Hargrave informed him, and the subsequent drowsiness which continued now, even in spite of the disturbing presence of so many strangers, of which indeed the girl seemed only partially conscious.

"She must be taken home at once, and put to bed," said he, "and we shall know more about it to-morrow. You said you had made some arrangement for her conveyance, I think, Sir Francis? I had better stay, perhaps, and see her safely landed."

"Very well," said the baronet; "yes, I have arranged about all that." He called his sister aside, and whispered a few words. Miss Hargrave's face brightened, and she quietly pressed her brother's hand. The three stood together by the fire in the office, interchanging an occasional commonplace remark in a low tone, Mr Morgan having retired to his insatiate ledgers. Sir Francis was thoughtful and silent. For want of some better subject of conversation, his sister took up the 'Telegraph,' and pointed to the advertisement she had noticed. Her brother glanced at it, made no remark, but after a minute or two took it up and read it again.

"Curious, is it not?" said his sister.

"Yes," said the baronet, "I've seen something like it before. It's an old story."

He dropped the paper on the ground—indeed it

was not tempting to handle more than one could help. Then he turned and looked out of the window.

"Here's the carriage at last, thank heaven! We're going to send her up to the Hall at once," he said to the surgeon, in brief explanation; "she'll have more chance there than in her own lodgings; and Mrs Hargrave, as you know, doctor, is a first-rate nurse."

He had found out, while hunting the surgeon up and down the little town of Wanslip, that two persons answering to the description of this young man and his sister had been occupying some very humble lodgings there for the last few days, though his informant did not know their names.

The girl, still only partly conscious, was carefully lifted into the carriage, in which all necessary preparations had been made, and Miss Hargrave found a corner there for herself. With the surgeon seated on the box, they set off at once for Wanscote Hall.

"I shall wait here till Johnson comes back, Lizzy—he can't be long now. We must give up the Vernons to-day, of course—you must write and explain."

It was not above three miles to the Hall, and in less than half an hour the sufferer was safe in bed in a darkened room, with Mrs Hargrave, that aunt of aunts, as her niece called her, sitting in her kingdom by the bedside. She had seen plenty of

trouble of all kinds; but to look at her placid face now, you would have said that in all her life she had never even known a care. Trouble had refined, not corroded her.

II.

The mare meanwhile had covered her seven miles easily within the three-quarters of an hour allowed her, and Croxton station was reached before the express for London came in sight. Johnson, the groom, had vainly tried to engage his companion in conversation during the drive. Beyond replying — judiciously enough — to his remarks upon Brown Bess's good qualities, the young stranger had been abstracted and silent. When he jumped down, however, he thanked the man warmly, and offered him a half-crown.

The groom looked at the money sheepishly. "No, thank you," said he; "you're very welcome, for my share of it, sir." He added the "sir" almost involuntarily.

"Take it, my good fellow," said the other; "this lift may be worth many half-crowns to me."

But Johnson looked at the little bundle tied up in a handkerchief, and thought there were not many half-crowns' worth there, at any rate.

"No, sir, thank you," he said, not moving his hand from the reins; "Sir Francis wouldn't like

it." The man was not selfish: not so many men of his class are, as their masters are apt to think. "I wish you a good journey, sir," he added, as he turned round, "and I hope no offence."

"That chap's a gentleman, I do believe," said the groom to himself, as he drove round to the inevitable "hotel" to wash out the mare's mouth and his own before returning. "He don't talk altogether like one, nor he don't wear no gloves, but he's got a gentleman's ways."

The object of these remarks reached London in due course, thanks to Sir Francis's help, not an hour after the train which he had missed. Taking a cab from the terminus, he drove straight down to the London Docks.

"Whereabouts would the Diana Vernon lie, for Port Philip?" he inquired of the first respectable-looking seaman he could find.

He was directed to the vessel at once—not a hundred yards distant. She was not off yet, then. "When do you sail?" he asked a boy who was carrying something on board.

"At six this evening. Are you a-going?"

"No. Can you tell me if Jack Winter is on board?"

"Ay; he was, howsumever, a quarter of an hour since."

He brushed past the lad on the narrow gangway, thereby drawing out rather a large oath from so

small a blasphemer, and in another minute had the object of his search pointed out to him. It was a bluff greasy-looking man, sitting on a barrel, with a short pipe in his mouth, and apparently not over-sober, to whom he was directed.

"Are you John Somers, formerly of Painter's Ridge, Victoria?" The speaker asked the question quickly and decidedly, but in a low tone of voice. He read the true answer in the seaman's face in a moment, greasy as it was. There was no mistake; he had found his man.

"Well," said the person addressed, with an oath and a laugh which was not meant to express pleasure, "you takes liberties with my name, mate. Anything else as you'd like to know?"

"Yes," said the other quickly, "a good many things, which I think you can tell me. You are John Somers?"

"I an't called so on board the Dirty Diana; *you* can call me so, if you like—or by any other name, if it strikes your fancy, youngster." And he stuck his pipe into his mouth again, and his hands into his pockets, with what might have been either defiance or contemptuous indifference.

"Look here," said the younger man, "never mind about the name—I may be wrong; but I will make it worth your while to listen to me, if you'll step ashore anywhere with me for ten minutes."

"You be blowed!" said Jack Winter, or Somers;

"we're off in a hour, and I've no time to listen to your business." He spoke with some hesitation, however, for he saw the other's tremulous eagerness.

"You've nothing to fear from me," resumed the stranger, "and everything to gain. I want you as a witness; and I say again, I'll make it worth your while." And feeling nervously in the old purse, he slipped something into the sailor's hand.

Casting a glance round the deck of the vessel to assure himself that no one was watching them, Jack Somers looked into his hand stealthily. The colour of what he saw there was enough. Calling to the boy as he passed, he charged him to tell the captain, if any inquiries were made, that he should be back "in no time," and motioned to his new acquaintance to follow him. He led the way to one of those common resorts for seamen which abounded in the neighbourhood.

"Ask for a private room, youngster, if you've any magging to do as you don't want made too common. They'll give you a parlour if you pay for it."

The pair were soon seated in a low close room, redolent of stale tobacco and worse odours.

"Now, John Somers," said the younger man (he quietly assumed the identity, and the other did not now seem inclined to dispute it), "you see I know you—but I'll call you Jack Winter for the present if you prefer it. I've no objection," he added, with

a half-laugh, "to a fancy name, if it suits a gentleman's purpose; I've hailed by more than one myself of late. But you were John Somers when you saw Richard Freeman married."

"John Somers it was," said the man sententiously, though with some surprise. He was quite at his ease now; for whatever doubtful points there were in his previous history, Richard Freeman's name was in no way connected with them.

"You saw him married?"

"Well, I did."

"You remember the name of the—lady?"

"Well, she wasn't that much of a lady; but I remember her well enough—Mary Gordon; she were some sort of a cousin o' mine."

The young man slightly flushed, and spoke rapidly.

"You witnessed the marriage. Did you know Richard Freeman well?"

"Better than I know you."

"Was that his real name? Did you know him go by any other?"

"Well, there was few of us as went by our Sunday names out there, you know. I don't suppose as his name *was* Freeman. I've heard he left another name behind him in England. I can't justly say as I remember it."

"Was it Hargrave?"

"Hargrave? I do believe it was! I've got a

paper somewhere as he gave me to keep, with his marriage lines on, and I count that's the name as is on it."

"You've got his marriage certificate? Then it's worth a hundred pounds to you, my good fellow, that's all, if you'll come with me," said the younger man, excitedly.

"The devil it is! Are you in sober earnest, mate, or have you been a-lushing it?"

The other hastily drew out a small pocket-book, and produced a scrap cut from a newspaper. It was the same advertisement which had attracted Miss Hargrave's attention at the station.

"Who'll go bail for the truth of this here?" asked Jack Somers, prudently.

"If you'll come with me at once to my lawyer's, and bring the paper you spoke of, and tell him what you've told me, you shall have part of the money down, and the rest when you give your evidence."

"I don't like lawyers," said Jack, shaking his head. "I allus give them sort as wide a berth as I can."

"If your story be true—as I have no doubt it is, mind—I'll make it two hundred."

"You're flush of your promises, youngster. Now let *me* ax *you* a question—you've axed me a pretty many. What's Dick Freeman, or whatever his name might be, to you?"

"He was my father," said the young man.

"D— me if you don't favour him, now I look at you! You've a considerable spice of his ways about you, too. Well, Dick was a good pal to me; I liked Dick. And you're Dick's son? I don't know as I'd ha' gone near a lawyer again, of my free will, for the chance of the hun'red pounds you talk about; but I were always a soft chap, and I'll go with you, if I miss my trip. You'll have to see me through with the cap'n, mind you—you and your lawyer-chap. He's good for that much, I suppose?"

The two men got into a Hansom, and drove rapidly to a small court near Clifford's Inn. They were shown into a room almost as close and dingy as that which they had left. Mr Brent, the lawyer, whom they found there sitting at his desk, went far to justify, in his outward appearance, Jack Somers's prejudice against the profession generally. This prejudice, however, it is only fair to say, was founded on certain personal experiences not of a favourable kind, connected with what he himself termed "a spree on shore," but which was known in the jargon of the law as "assault and battery," and which had led to his shipping himself on board the Diana under his present *alias*. He had been assured, however, in the course of his drive from the Docks, that the law at present had no terrors for him, but rather a prospect of considerable ad-

vantage; so that when he was presented to Mr Brent by his lawful surname, he made no difficulty on the point.

"So we've got our witness, Mr Hargrave," said the lawyer, when the introduction had been duly made. "I knew Furritt was right. Never knew him fail, sir,—that is, when properly paid. Always pay a man well, Mr Hargrave, when you want your work well done. That's a maxim of mine. I'm sure you'll agree with me, Mr Somers?"

Jack Somers indicated his assent to so sound a principle.

"You'll be well paid for your work, sir, as you'll find; it's Mr Hargrave's wish—excuse me if I call you so for the present," he added, turning to the younger man—"it's Mr Hargrave's expressed wish to act in the whole of this business on the most liberal principles. Do I represent you correctly, sir?"

"Yes, yes," said the one whom the lawyer called Hargrave, in a tone of some impatience. "But we have no time to lose, Mr Brent; the vessel of which Mr Somers is mate sails this evening."

"She must sail without Mr Somers, then, my dear sir; we cannot possibly spare him, now we have him. The law must lay an embargo on you, Mr Somers. But we'll make that all right," said the lawyer, as he saw signs of restlessness on the sailor's part. "I'll send down my clerk at once."

He rang the bell, and gave his instructions to a squinting young man who answered it. "We'll serve a subpœna on you in due form in the course of the evening," he continued; "we could not part with you, sir, on any account: and, as I observed just now, you will be more than satisfied for any inconvenience. He knows of the reward, Mr Hargrave?"

"I knows," said Somers, with a wave of his hand, perhaps implying that such things were not necessary to discuss between gentlemen—"I knows; but I'm not sure I'd ha' come here at all, but as he says he's a son of Dick Freeman's. I liked Dick."

"You witnessed the marriage of Richard Freeman —we'll call him so, you know—with Mary Gordon, in March 18—?" said the lawyer, referring to some notes.

"Month o' March, was it? Well," he said, after some calculations of his own personal movements, "I pritty well think it was; leastways, when they were married, I saw the job done, that's sartain. And I promised Dick I'd remember it."

"At Ballarat, were they married?"

"Quite right," said Jack.

"There was a fire there, some two or three years after? The wooden church was burnt?"

"The whole town were burnt, as you may say."

"Then the registers were burnt. It's all right,

it's all right," said the lawyer, eagerly; "that corresponds exactly with Furritt's information. Capital fellow, Furritt; never wrong. Mr Somers, you're the man that has given us a deal of trouble —and expense; but we're very glad to see you. You're the 'missing link,' Mr Somers, that we read about in the—in the——"

Mr Brent was not sure it was in the Scriptures. In his natural exultation at having caught his witness, he was wandering out of the safe paths of law into the thorny thickets of literature; so he wisely pulled up with a cough which covered his retreat.

There was no doubt, however, that they had got the very man they had long been looking for, and that Mr Furritt, of the "Private Inquiry" Office, had done his work quite successfully. The particulars of the sailor's evidence were very soon committed to writing by Mr Brent, read over, and duly signed with Jack Somers's mark.

"Most complete case," said the lawyer: "I don't suppose Sir Francis will go into court against it. We've got the marriage certificate, the only surviving witness in person, the baptism certificates; in fact, there's not even a legal doubt. I propose to reopen negotiations with the other party at once. Compromises are against our interests, of course, but as an honest lawyer I always recommend them, especially in family cases, you know, Mr Hargrave

—especially in family cases, where feelings have to be considered. Mr Somers will stay with you, or where we may easily find him, I conclude?"

Young Hargrave had drawn out his pocket-book, and had a bank-note in his hand.

"Here, Somers," he said, "there's the fifty I promised down. It's about the last of the lot, Mr Brent," he added, with a half-bitter laugh. "They were hard got. I hope they won't be wasted."

"You hand this to me in trust for Mr Somers," said Brent, looking significantly at the younger man, and arresting the note on the way across the table. "This is in part payment of the reward offered, and I am authorised to hand it over to Mr Somers immediately on his evidence being given in court to the effect of this disposition?"

"You're a precious cunning old duffer, you are," said Jack Somers. "Suppose I says as I won't squeak till you hands me that over—eh? two can play at hold-fast, I'd have you remember. But if there's any slice o' luck coming to Dick Freeman's son, as I count there is from your talk, I arn't the man to baulk him of it. You may keep the flimsy till I axes for it, lawyer; mind it don't stick to your fingers, though. And now, Mr Hargrave, I'm getting dry."

Hargrave was considerably embarrassed what to do with his witness, now he had caught him. He

looked at his legal adviser in some dismay; but that gentleman, in no way offended by the sailor's uncomplimentary address, after quietly securing the note, recommended them both to a house in the immediate neighbourhood, where he assured them they would find every accommodation in the way of board and lodging. He called young Hargrave aside before they parted.

"I think, with all submission, Mr Hargrave, I'd keep him within reach, though I don't think he's inclined to bolt; but safe's safe, you know. And I propose to go down myself to-morrow or next day to make a last offer to Messrs Hunt, Sir Francis's people. They'll listen to reason now, if they are the wise men they pass for."

"I don't want hard terms, Mr Brent, remember: I don't seem to make you understand the one thing I care for—establishing the marriage. I won't forego my rights in one way; but it's not a matter of money with me, remember that. I want no accounts of the estate, as you call them, or arrears of any kind. It's hard enough on him as it is."

"Pooh! he had enough of his mother's, without the baronetcy. The Wanscote estates are not above half his income."

"So much the better. But I want no back-reckonings—let by-gones be by-gones."

"You really are the most unreasonably reasonable client that I ever fell in with in the course of my

profession," said Mr Brent; "however, they can hardly fail to close at once with such terms as you insist on offering; except that your very liberality might seem, perhaps—we lawyers are suspicious, you will say—to imply a doubt of the strength of our case."

"You don't think there is any doubt?"

"Not a shadow. I'm risking a good deal on its validity, you know, Mr Hargrave; if I don't call you 'Sir Richard,' it's merely that I don't wish to seem obtrusive."

"You don't risk much," said Hargrave, bluntly.

"Time and brains are money, sir. And the case, remember, was not so promising when our terms were made. I'm getting an old man, too, and your annuity won't have to run over many years."

"I'm not grudging you what I agreed to—not at all. We'll look in to-morrow, shall we?"

"Early, if you please—or rather, this evening. I'll get this Mr Somers's evidence into proper shape; and to-morrow, as I said, I shall go down to Wanslip."

III.

When Sir Francis Hargrave reached home, he found the medical report of the patient not wholly satisfactory. Evolved from the professional cloud in which the surgeon thought fit to wrap his infor-

mation, the plain truth was that he feared some injury to the brain. The baronet was very urgent, first, that further advice should be had; and secondly, that the surgeon should not leave the house for the present: and when the first was pronounced wholly unnecessary, and the second all but impossible, seeing that there were cases in and about Wanslip which were considered quite as interesting by the parties immediately concerned, Sir Francis reluctantly compromised matters by getting from him a promise to return that evening to the hall to dine and sleep. A *tête-à-tête* dinner with Mr M'Farlane was rather a high price to pay as a retainer for his services, no doubt; but in his present mood, the owner of Wanscote was inclined to be liberal.

"Rest and quiet are worth all the doctors in the world for the next four hours," said M'Farlane, honestly; "and I'll be with you at seven, if that case goes at all as it should."

He returned in due course, and pronounced his patient to be going on admirably; in fact, he found her comfortably asleep. The dinner passed—so well, that the surgeon, who had never dined at Wanscote before, even pronounced the baronet in his heart to be "not a bad fellow;" a large concession on his part, since he had imbibed the modern doctrine that peers and bishops and baronets, and suchlike, were utter anachronisms in an age of

realities. He enjoyed his dinner and his wine none the less, rather the more; it was diverting some small part of capital to the interests of labour. He was leisurely sipping his coffee with the same pleasurable feeling, and Sir Francis had taken out his watch, and begun an apology about having letters to write which would oblige him to leave Mr M'Farlane to amuse himself for an hour or so, when a message from Mrs Hargrave summoned the surgeon up-stairs.

The patient had awoke, at first apparently much revived, and perfectly sensible. She had asked with some natural surprise where she was, and when informed, had begged in a very excited manner to be allowed to see Miss Hargrave alone. The elder lady had humoured her, but had re-entered the room very soon on a slight excuse, entertaining a prudent suspicion that it might be desirable, for the patient's sake, to cut such an interview short, if she continued to betray excitement. The result seemed quite to justify the interruption; for she found her niece in a sad state of bewilderment. The girl was now insisting on getting up, and returning to what she called her home, after puzzling poor Lizzy with fresh entreaties for forgiveness for some imaginary wrong. Yet there was more than method in her madness, if such it was. She inquired anxiously whether her brother had caught his train to London, showing a

perfect recollection of all the circumstances of his journey. They did not know at all how to deal with her, and Mr M'Farlane was requested to give his advice.

The surgeon felt her pulse, and asked the ordinary questions.

"You think I am wandering, sir," said she; "I know I am not. I was shaken a good deal, but I am quite recovered now. I can walk to Wanslip quite well, or you can send something for me, as it is so late—but I cannot stay here. Pray, *pray*, don't keep me!"

"My dear young lady, you are in my hands now, if you please. I'm absolute here—monarch of all I survey—and I can't allow you to leave this room to-night. But I'll do anything else for you, and I daresay you'll be well enough to go to-morrow. Can I write to any one for you, or do anything for you in Wanslip? Would you like any of your friends sent for?"

"Yes, yes," said the girl, "if I only knew where to write to for him. I'm not sure of his address."

"Well, let it all alone till to-morrow; you'll be better then. I'll give you something now that will do you good."

He went out of the room with Miss Hargrave, leaving the elder lady still in attendance.

"She's got something on her mind," said he. "Her pulse is all right, and she's rational enough.

The cut on the temple is quite superficial. It's on her mind, and she may worry herself ill. Perhaps she said something to you?"

Miss Hargrave hesitated. Her own idea had been that this strange girl had escaped from a lunatic asylum, but that her brother, or husband, or whatever he was, would hardly in that case have left her so unceremoniously at the station. "She has been talking to me rather strangely," she replied; but she had a delicacy in repeating all that had passed.

"Well, we'll give her a composing draught to-night—quite innocent—but it's not a case for medicine. She's in trouble, poor thing."

There was a complaint called love, which admitted of all manner of complications, and for which there was no known remedy in the old or new pharmacopœia — *nullis medicabilis herbis*, as Mr M'Farlane said when he found himself in classical company, quoting the Latin grammar of his boyhood. He had not the smallest doubt in his own mind that this was a virulent case of the disease, but he was not quite sure whether he could venture upon a joke on that subject with a baronet's sister. Was the young man whom she called her brother, any brother at all? Had they run away together, and had she or he repented? Well, he was not called upon to settle these questions. He went down to the drawing-room, but Sir Francis was still

in his library, and Miss Hargrave soon pleaded fatigue and retired. So Mr M'Farlane, having had a long day's work and a good dinner, and never being over-fond of his own company, wished himself good-night, and went off to bed.

There was nothing whatever to detain him the next morning. Beyond a trifling scar on the forehead, his patient was none the worse for the accident. Sir Francis begged him to call again; but it was not without remonstrance—he was very honest in his work—that he consented to look in the next day. The girl's excitement had considerably subsided, and the evident pain which Lizzy Hargrave showed whenever she talked of leaving the Hall without the surgeon's permission—which that young lady had privately begged him not to give—seemed to have overcome in some degree her reluctance to remain. Her protest grew more feeble, and the tears she shed now were rather those of gratitude to her kind hostesses than of distress.

Miss Hargrave was perhaps rather of an impulsive nature. She had been her brother's companion from her earliest years, and could hardly be said to have a friend of her own sex. It might be these circumstances, combined with a little love of patronage, which made her take so very decided a fancy to this stranger, moving apparently in so totally different a sphere from her own.

There was something specially attractive about

the girl, too. She had not all the conventional manners of polished society, it was true; but she had been brought up, as Mrs Hargrave soon gathered from her, in Australia—and the probable manners and customs of society there left a large margin for allowances. In gentleness and delicacy of feeling, which are the same in one continent as the other, the guest was the equal of her entertainers — in intelligence, certainly not their inferior.

"She is a very remarkable girl, this Miss Freeman," said Mrs Hargrave, after a long conversation in the drawing-room on the first occasion of her appearance there.

"She's a darling," said the more enthusiastic and less logical Lizzy. "What do *you* think, Francis?"

What the brother thought he did not say. Indeed, he had said very little the last two days. But in the evening, when they were assembled again, the talk happened to turn upon Australian scenery. A casual remark made by their young guest betrayed that she had some of the tastes, at least, of an artist. Water-colours were Sir Francis's passion, and he had a very fair share of skill in that accomplishment. He did what he could not always be induced to do to oblige his visitors—he went to the library, and produced a portfolio of rough but very clever sketches. People were generally so stupid,

as he said—pretending to admire what they knew nothing at all about. But it was not so this evening. The admiration of his new friend was very quiet and subdued; but the few remarks she made were quite enough, to the ear of the initiated, to betray a very considerable proficiency in the art.

"Oh! show her that pretty sketch you made for me of the two ponies," said Lizzy; "that's the best of all."

He turned over the portfolio, and found what she wanted. "It's a wretched thing, Lizzy, as I've often told you," he said, as he threw it out.

"I like the rougher sketches better," remarked Miss Freeman, quietly, after a glance at it; for she was evidently expected to say something.

"Exactly," said the baronet, turning it on its back —"you are quite right; I can't draw animals—I always wish I could. You are quite right—and honest. I daresay you can do a great deal better than these things.

"My father was considered to draw well," she replied; "and he took great pains with me—at one time; and I was very fond of it—that's all."

She seemed to speak under very great restraint, and Sir Francis, with the tact of a gentleman, soon put the drawings away. He tried to draw her into conversation on other subjects, but she became very silent, and soon asked leave to retire.

Sir Francis had obtained more particulars about

his guest than the rest of his household were aware of. He had found out the widow with whom young Freeman and his sister had been lodging at Wanslip for the last four or five days, and had perfectly satisfied himself as to their entire respectability, to say the least. He had also ascertained that the young man had been searching registers, and making very particular inquiries as to the Hargrave family. The advertisement which had caught his sister's eye had brought to his recollection an old report, to which his legal advisers gave no credence whatever, of a marriage contracted by a deceased uncle in Australia, and of a claim set up, or proposed to be set up, by the children of such marriage, to the baronetcy and the Wanscote estates. But this story had been set afloat a few months after his own succession to the estate, now fully three years ago, and the matter would hardly have been allowed to sleep so long, had the claim rested on any plausible foundation. Richard Hargrave, an elder brother of Sir Francis's father, at a time when his own prospects of succession seemed utterly remote, had gone off to the colonies (to the considerable relief of his relatives) and had died there. He had formed a discreditable connection in England before he left, and very probably the woman had followed him to Queensland, and passed herself off as his wife; but that he had any legitimate heirs was highly improbable. Were these Freemans the claimants? Sir

Francis had even taken the trouble to call on his lawyers, and draw their attention to the repetition of the old advertisement in the newspapers. Mr Hunt, the shrewd old senior partner, laughed.

"It's old Brent at it again; I know by the address. He's getting money out of some poor devil, but he can have no case. Mr Richard Hargrave had a natural son, no doubt—possibly two or three; but he never married that woman, unless it was within six months of his death. And that would be perfectly immaterial to us, you know, Sir Francis."

Mr Hunt was the family adviser and friend of many years, and his voice was to the young baronet as the voice of an oracle. It was rather disagreeable, however, even this shadow of a claim; more especially if, as he began strongly to suspect, he had one of the claimants now in his house, connected with him by this new and singular obligation. He would like exceedingly to do something for this young man and his sister, and it would interfere very unpleasantly with his intentions if they or their advisers should be inclined to regard his offer in the light of a bribe or a compromise. The baronet was in a very uncomfortable state of mind altogether —a fact which did not entirely escape his aunt's observation. He treated his reluctant guest with scrupulous kindness and attention, but he left her entertainment almost entirely in the hands of his sister and Mrs Hargrave. Miss Freeman had so far

yielded to that lady's arguments as to consent to remain at Wanscote until her brother returned from London; and Sir Francis had left instructions at Wanslip that the latter, on his arrival, should be fully informed of his sister's whereabouts, and the circumstances which had brought her to Wanscote; or that any communication received from him should be forwarded to the Hall at once by special messenger.

"You pain us all considerably, Miss Freeman," he said to her, on almost the only occasion they happened to be left alone, "by your extreme eagerness to leave us; but you have the right, and we submit."

"I am very sorry to seem so ungrateful — indeed I am."

"Nay, excuse me, it is not a question of gratitude on your part; and that's just what I can't understand. Philosophers tell us (and I am cynic enough to believe) that people hate the sight of those who have laid them under an obligation; so that, if *I* were anxious to get rid of *you*, it would be all quite in accordance with our delightful human nature. But when a man has done another a real service, it is said he feels kindly disposed to him—feels a sort of property in him, you see—ever afterwards. I suppose the rule don't apply to a woman."

It was difficult to say whether he spoke more in

jest than in earnest, though it was with a laugh of badinage that he uttered the words, and he looked out of the window as he spoke. She made no immediate reply; and when he turned round he felt sure she was in tears, though she held her face down close over some pretence of work which Lizzy had found for her.

"I beg your pardon," he said, gently—"really, I beg your pardon; there is something I do not understand about it all, I see. I am very unlucky. I won't say anything more on the subject. When you get back to your own friends, perhaps you will so far forgive me as to let me know if there is any possible way in which I can further your brother's views in life. I owe *him* nothing, you know," he added, laughing, "so perhaps he won't be proud; indeed, *I* did something for *him*."

"Oh! you have all been most kind to us from the first—that makes it so—so——"

"So very disagreeable?"

She was only a girl of nineteen, though her self-dependent life had given her much of the experience of a woman; and the absurdity of the conclusion made her laugh, just a little laugh, in spite of her real distress. It was the first time she had done more than smile.

He came nearer to her, and spoke earnestly and quietly enough.

"Is it because we are rich and you are poor, that

you should be too proud to accept our gratitude? Is that quite as it should be?"

"No," said the Australian, looking him full in the face for a moment—"no—it's not that, Sir Francis; I've seen men living like princes one week and beggars the next. I don't think very much of money. I've known what it is to want it, too—a want I suppose you cannot even understand. But money's a miserable thing—a miserable thing, I mean, for people to quarrel about."

He thought he began partly to understand her; but Mrs Hargrave came into the room at the moment, and he went out for his morning's ride. When he returned to luncheon he found his aunt waiting for him.

"This young thing's brother's come, and he's in the library—a rather impetuous young man, it seems to me. He wishes to see you before he takes his sister home; so if you were to go to him at once it might perhaps be as well."

Sir Francis found his visitor awaiting him; Miss Freeman was with him, but left the library as he entered. He put out his hand frankly; the young man had the bearing of a gentleman, and was in more presentable costume than when they had last met.

"Mr Freeman, I think? though our last meeting was rather a hurried one."

The young man bowed. "I have to thank you,

Sir Francis Hargrave, as I have only lately learnt, for your great politeness—kindness, I should say—to a stranger. I do thank you—though I could almost wish that kindness had not been done. Still more I thank you for your goodness to my sister."

Sir Francis interrupted him. "You have been misinformed entirely, Mr Freeman. I am the person to offer thanks, if thanks could repay, or were desired. To Miss Freeman's bravery, under God's providence, I owe it that I am here alive."

"Pooh! the girl put out her hand, she tells me, as any one would, and you caught it. There is no obligation. We don't think much of such things where we came from. And most of you English gentlemen, I take it, would have sent a poor girl home with a ten-pound note, perhaps, to pay the doctor, and called next day. You have dealt with her as if she were one of your own, she tells me: and I say again, I thank you for it."

He spoke somewhat roughly, but there was heart in his tone and words.

Again Sir Francis warmly disclaimed the other's interpretation.

"I say," he continued, "you and yours have treated my sister as if she were one of your own blood. You were right, sir—she is a Hargrave by birth and name."

"Indeed!" said the baronet. He saw now pretty well what was coming.

"I am come on an unpleasant errand, and I want to get it done. My name is Richard Hargrave, son of Richard Hargrave, your father's elder brother."

Sir Francis bowed. "You claim to be his lawful heir?"

"I do. Not exactly in the sense you put it, however. I came to England to make out my right to this baronetcy, and to this place, I suppose," said he, looking round him; "but more than all, I had a fancy to prove I was not the bastard your lawyers chose to call me. I have done it, sir. I have full proof—your lawyers have admitted it—of my mother's marriage, and my own legitimacy. But I offer you terms—fair terms, I think. Acknowledge me as my father's son; give me enough for a fair start in the new country—it suits me better than the old; buy me a farm, and stock it—I leave it to you; and I'll never trouble you about the title or the estates."

Sir Francis smiled and shook his head as the other ran on.

"I know what you think—you think the claim's a bad one, or you think I'm a fool. Perhaps I am that last; my lawyer tells me so, however. But I can see the loss to you will be far greater than the gain to me; you were brought up to this sort of thing, you see, and I wasn't. Nor I don't altogether hold with your primogeniture laws. I don't see why my father should have had all the estate,

just because he happened to be born a year or two before yours. And a handle to a man's name is no great use in a new country. And the long and short of it all is this: it's more than likely I might not have made my case so clear but for your help; and I think I should expect this old house to fall down and smother me, if I turned you out of it."

"My good sir," said the baronet, as soon as he could get room for a word, "these things are all best left to our lawyers. No doubt you are well advised, but we won't discuss it here."

"Look here," said the other, producing a small packet, and, after hastily unfolding it, throwing it on the library table; "there are my proofs. Show them to your lawyers, if you will. I quarrelled with mine this morning before I could get them from him. Or you and I could settle it. Read them, and if I'm wrong, I'm wrong. If not, you'll do what I ask of you, and you may keep them if you will."

"Pardon me, sir," said Sir Francis, somewhat haughtily; "I dispute your claim because I believe it to be unfounded, but you mistake me if you suppose I would keep or take what was not my own." And he pushed the papers back to their owner.

They were interrupted by the entrance of a servant.

"Mr Hunt, Sir Francis, wishes to see you."

"Show him in."

The staid man of business would have started, but that he never allowed himself such an indiscretion, when he saw the visitor with whom the baronet was closeted.

"I came, Sir Francis——"

"You came just when you were wanted, Hunt. Mr Freeman wants me to act as my own lawyer, and his too, I believe—a responsibility which I decline."

"What is it, Sir Francis?" said the lawyer, taking a seat—he was quite at home in that house; "what is it?"

Sir Francis shortly explained the claim, and the proposal which had been laid before him.

"This young gentleman was so good as to show me these papers this morning," said the lawyer. "I glanced at them at his special request, though, as I told him, it was quite out of the usual course of business."

"And you admitted these certificates were all right," said the Australian.

"I told you I saw no reason to doubt that they were genuine," said the lawyer. "Of your own baptism certificate, indeed, we have a copy in our office; and the existence of the marriage I always thought very possible."

Sir Francis Hargrave could not check a half-exclamation of surprise. Mr Hunt, however, was perfectly composed.

"I also told you, if you will be good enough to remember, that we had a complete answer to the case. A certificate of baptism, sir, is unfortunately no evidence as to birth. I did not expect to find you here, but I can have no objection to show you what I had brought to show Sir Francis, as soon as we heard of the revival of this claim. Here is the registrar's certificate of the birth of one Richard Hargrave Gordon, son of Mary Gordon, single woman, of Wanslip, in 18—. (Just one year previous to the marriage at Ballarat, you will find.) And I have this morning, since you called on me, seen the woman Lester—you remember, Sir Francis—who is prepared to give evidence of the birth. I don't want to enter into any particulars that might be painful to you," continued the lawyer to the young man, who stood silent and perturbed, and had turned very pale, with one hand laid heavily on the library table; "but the subsequent baptism of a Richard Hargrave by the chaplain of the Nemesis at Geelong is, you see, quite compatible with his birth as Richard Gordon two years before. That you were aware of this I do not for a moment assume," he added, hastily, as the other made a sudden exclamation.

"Mr Freeman," interposed the baronet, "you made me a proposition just now in the way of compromise; it was a handsome one. I accept it. Name the locality where you would wish to settle, and Mr Hunt has my instructions at once to——"

"No!" shouted the Australian; "I wanted justice, not charity. No, Sir Francis Hargrave — I beg your pardon, I ought to thank you, but I'm taken aback; you've rather knocked me down, you see. Your tale's all right, I daresay; it's what I've heard before at times, when my mother was in a passion with me. Let me see the paper.—Ay, it's all right enough, no doubt. And this isn't worth a rush," said he, taking up the marriage certificate. He tore it passionately in two, and threw it on the floor.

"Stay, sir," said Hunt, quickly picking it up; "young men are hasty. That paper concerns others besides yourself. You have a sister: unless I much mistake, that proves her the legitimate daughter of the late Mr Richard Hargrave."

"Ah!" said Sir Francis, with considerable interest; "there seems some complication in this case, Mr —— Hargrave. I say again, I accept your first proposal; it will be fair enough for us both, and less than you thought your just claim."

"No," said the new claimant; "I'll go back to the diggings. I'm young enough to make a fortune yet, and I won't spend it on lawyers, you may be sure."

Sir Francis Hargrave walked round the room, and laid his hand on his cousin's shoulder.

"Richard Hargrave," said he, "we are blood relations. Your sister has saved my life. Let me

do a kinsman's part by you. — Mr Hunt, kindly leave us to have a talk together. Come back to dinner, will you? and we'll have some of your sound advice then."

"I'll give some now, gratis," said the old lawyer. "Don't throw away friends, young man; they are not picked up so easily as gold is." Then he bowed and took his leave.

Sir Francis followed him civilly to the door, and closed it carefully after him. The young Australian stood silently looking at the torn certificate, which Mr Hunt had laid on the table.

"You must take your own course as to your future life," said the baronet. "I will say no more now on that head, except that I sincerely feel for your disappointment, and I shall always remember the generous proposal you made to me. But in this at least you will indulge me—be my guest for a few days."

The other shook his head.

"You owe me a kindness," said the baronet. "I have a selfish and personal reason for what I ask."

He gave way, though with evident reluctance. Grasping his hand, Sir Francis thanked him warmly; then he took him at once to his sister, and left them together. It was not long, however, before Lizzy Hargrave interrupted them. Her brother had told her at least enough of the state of the case to let her into the secret that she and Madeline Hargrave

were first cousins, and that he very earnestly desired that they should be good friends. Mr Hunt's presence at the dinner-table, perhaps, saved some embarrassment to all parties; and before he left, late in the evening, the young Australian's scruples had been in a great measure removed. His sister, it was plain, was considered no intruder in the Wanscote family; and for her sake he was content to remain a week as a guest at the Hall. Sir Francis's quiet kindness won the young man's heart before that week was over; he had known little but of the rougher side of life hitherto. He went with the baronet to London, and in another month he sailed to take possession of one of the best "runs" in Victoria.

But his sister Madeline only accompanied him as far as the steamer which carried him out. That month spent in London with "aunt" Hargrave and her cousin had opened a new life to her in many ways; and she returned to Wanscote as Lady Hargrave.

THE CONGRESS AND THE AGAPEDOME.

A TALE OF PEACE AND LOVE.

BY THE LATE PROFESSOR AYTOUN.

[*MAGA.* SEPTEMBER 1851.]

CHAPTER I.

IF I were to commence my story by stating, in the manner of the military biographers, that Jack Wilkinson was as brave a man as ever pushed a bayonet into the brisket of a Frenchman, I should be telling a confounded lie, seeing that, to the best of my knowledge, Jack never had the opportunity of attempting practical phlebotomy. I shall content myself with describing him as one of the finest and best-hearted fellows that ever held her Majesty's commission; and no one who is acquainted with the general character of the officers of the British army, will require a higher eulogium.

Jack and I were early cronies at school; but we soon separated, having been born under the influence of different planets. Mars, who had the charge of Jack, of course devoted him to the army;

Jupiter, who was bound to look after my interests, could find nothing better for me than a situation in the Woods and Forests, with a faint chance of becoming in time a subordinate Commissioner—that is, provided the wrongs of Ann Hicks do not precipitate the abolition of the whole department. Ten years elapsed before we met; and I regret to say that, during that interval, neither of us had ascended many rounds of the ladder of promotion. As was most natural, I considered my own case as peculiarly hard, and yet Jack's was perhaps harder. He had visited with his regiment, in the course of duty, the Cape, the Ionian Islands, Gibraltar, and the West Indies. He had caught an ague in Canada, and had been transplanted to the north of Ireland by way of a cure; and yet he had not gained a higher rank in the service than that of Lieutenant. The fact is, that Jack was poor, and his brother officers as tough as though they had been made of caoutchouc. Despite the varieties of climate to which they were exposed, not one of them would give up the ghost; even the old colonel, who had been twice despaired of, recovered from the yellow fever, and within a week after was lapping his claret at the mess-table as jollily as if nothing had happened. The regiment had a bad name in the service: they called it, I believe, "the Immortals."

Jack Wilkinson, as I have said, was poor, but he had an uncle who was enormously rich. This

uncle, Mr Peter Pettigrew by name, was an old bachelor and retired merchant, not likely, according to the ordinary calculation of chances, to marry; and as he had no other near relative save Jack, to whom, moreover, he was sincerely attached, my friend was generally regarded in the light of a prospective proprietor, and might doubtless, had he been so inclined, have negotiated a loan, at or under seventy per cent, with one of those respectable gentlemen who are making such violent efforts to abolish Christian legislation. But Pettigrew also was tough as one of "the Immortals," and Jack was too prudent a fellow to intrust himself to hands so eminently accomplished in the art of wringing the last drop of moisture from a sponge. His uncle, he said, had always behaved handsomely to him, and he would see the whole tribe of Issachar drowned in the Dardanelles rather than abuse his kindness by raising money on a post-obit. Pettigrew, indeed, had paid for his commission, and, moreover, given him a fair allowance whilst he was quartered abroad—circumstances which rendered it extremely probable that he would come forward to assist his nephew so soon as the latter had any prospect of purchasing his company.

Happening by accident to be in Hull, where the regiment was quartered, I encountered Wilkinson, whom I found not a whit altered for the worse, either in mind or body, since the days when we

were at school together; and at his instance I agreed to prolong my stay, and partake of the hospitality of the Immortals. A merry set they were! The major told a capital story, the senior captain sung like Incledon, the *cuisine* was beyond reproach, and the liquor only too alluring. But all things must have an end. It is wise to quit even the most delightful society before it palls upon you, and before it is accurately ascertained that you, clever fellow as you are, can be, on occasion, quite as prosy and ridiculous as your neighbours; therefore on the third day I declined a renewal of the ambrosial banquet, and succeeded in persuading Wilkinson to take a quiet dinner with me at my own hotel. He assented—the more readily, perhaps, that he appeared slightly depressed in spirits, a phenomenon not altogether unknown under similar circumstances.

After the cloth was removed, we began to discourse upon our respective fortunes, not omitting the usual complimentary remarks which, in such moments of confidence, are applied to one's superiors, who may be very thankful that they do not possess a preternatural power of hearing. Jack informed me that at length a vacancy had occurred in his regiment, and that he had now an opportunity, could he deposit the money, of getting his captaincy. But there was evidently a screw loose somewhere.

"I must own," said Jack, "that it *is* hard, after having waited so long, to lose a chance which may not occur again for years; but what can I do? You see I haven't got the money; so I suppose I must just bend to my luck, and wait in patience for my company until my head is as bare as a billiard-ball!"

"But, Jack," said I, "excuse me for making the remark—but won't your uncle, Mr Pettigrew, assist you?"

"Not the slightest chance of it."

"You surprise me," said I; "I am very sorry to hear you say so. I always understood that you were a prime favourite of his."

"So I was; and so, perhaps, I am," replied Wilkinson; "but that don't alter the matter."

"Why, surely," said I, "if he is inclined to help you at all, he will not be backward at a time like this. I am afraid, Jack, you allow your modesty to wrong you."

"I shall permit my modesty," said Jack, "to take no such impertinent liberty. But I see you don't know my uncle Peter."

"I have not that pleasure, certainly; but he bears the character of a good honest fellow, and everybody believes that you are to be his heir."

"That may be, or may not, according to circumstances," said Wilkinson. "You are quite right as to his character, which I would advise no one to

challenge in my presence; for, though I should never get another stiver from him, or see a farthing of his property, I am bound to acknowledge that he has acted towards me in the most generous manner. But I repeat that you don't understand my uncle."

"Nor ever shall," said I, "unless you condescend to enlighten me."

"Well, then, listen. Old Peter would be a regular trump, but for one besetting foible. He cannot resist a crotchet. The more palpably absurd and idiotical any scheme may be, the more eagerly he adopts it; nay, unless it *is* absurd and idiotical, such as no man of common-sense would listen to for a moment, he will have nothing to say to it. He is quite shrewd enough with regard to commercial matters. During the railway mania, he is supposed to have doubled his capital. Never having had any faith in the stability of the system, he sold out just at the right moment, alleging that it was full time to do so, when Sir Robert Peel introduced a bill giving the Government the right of purchasing any line when its dividends amounted to ten per cent. The result proved that he was correct."

"It did, undoubtedly. But surely that is no evidence of his extreme tendency to be led astray by crotchets?"

"Quite the reverse: the scheme was not suffi-

ciently absurd for him. Besides, I must tell you, that in pure commercial matters it would be very difficult to overreach or deceive my uncle. He has a clear eye for pounds, shillings, and pence—principal and interest—and can look very well after himself when his purse is directly assailed. His real weakness lies in sentiment."

"Not, I trust, towards the feminine gender? That might be awkward for you in a gentleman of his years!"

"Not precisely—though I would not like to trust him in the hands of a designing female. His besetting weakness turns on the point of the regeneration of mankind. Forty or fifty years ago he would have been a follower of Johanna Southcote. He subscribed liberally to Owen's schemes, and was within an ace of turning out with Thom of Canterbury. Incredible as it may appear, he actually was for a time a regular and accepted Mormonite."

"You don't mean to say so?"

"Fact, I assure you, upon my honour! But for a swindle that Joe Smith tried to perpetrate about the discounting of a bill, Peter Pettigrew might at this moment have been a leading saint in the temple of Nauvoo, or whatever else they call the capital of that polygamous and promiscuous persuasion."

"You amaze me. How any man of common-sense——"

"That's just the point. Where common-sense ends, Uncle Pettigrew begins. Give him a mere thread of practicability, and he will arrive at a sound conclusion. Envelope him in the mist of theory, and he will walk headlong over a precipice."

"Why, Jack," said I, "you seem to have improved in your figures of speech since you joined the army. That last sentence was worth preservation. But I don't clearly understand you yet. What is his present phase, which seems to stand in the way of your prospects?"

"Can't you guess? What is the most absurd feature of the present time?"

"That," said I, "is a very difficult question. There's Free Trade, and the proposed Exhibition —both of them absurd enough, if you look to their ultimate tendency. Then there are Sir Charles Wood's Budget, and the new Reform Bill, and the Encumbered Estates Act, and the whole rubbish of the Cabinet, which they have neither sense to suppress nor courage to carry through. Upon my word, Jack, it would be impossible for me to answer your question satisfactorily."

"What do you think of the Peace Congress?" asked Wilkinson.

"As Palmerston does," said I; "remarkably meanly. But why do you put that point? Surely Mr Pettigrew has not become a disciple of the blatant blacksmith?"

"Read that, and judge for yourself," said Wilkinson, handing me over a letter.

I read as follows :—

"My dear Nephew,—I have your letter of the 15th, apprising me of your wish to obtain what you term a step in the service. I am aware that I am not entitled to blame you for a misguided and lamentably mistaken zeal, which, to my shame be it said, I was the means of originally kindling; still, you must excuse me if, with the new lights which have been vouchsafed to me, I decline to assist your progress towards wholesale homicide, or lend any further countenance to a profession which is subversive of that universal brotherhood and entire fraternity which ought to prevail among the nations. The fact is, Jack, that, up to the present time, I have entertained ideas which were totally false regarding the greatness of my country. I used to think that England was quite as glorious from her renown in arms as from her skill in arts—that she had reason to plume herself upon her ancient and modern victories, and that patriotism was a virtue which it was incumbent upon freemen to view with respect and veneration. Led astray by these wretched prejudices, I gave my consent to your enrolling yourself in the ranks of the British army, little thinking that, by such a step, I was doing a material injury to the cause of general pacification,

and, in fact, retarding the advent of that millennium which will commence so soon as the military profession is entirely suppressed throughout Europe. I am now also painfully aware that, towards you individually, I have failed in performing my duty. I have been the means of inoculating you with a thirst for human blood, and of depriving you of that opportunity of adding to the resources of your country, which you might have enjoyed had I placed you early in one of those establishments which, by sending exports to the uttermost parts of the earth, have contributed so magnificently to the diffusion of British patterns, and the growth of American cotton under a mild system of servitude, which none, save the minions of royalty, dare denominate as actual slavery.

"In short, Jack, I have wronged you; but I should wrong you still more were I to furnish you with the means of advancing one other step in your bloody and inhuman profession. It is full time that we should discard all national recollections. We have already given a glorious example to Europe and the world, by throwing open our ports to their produce without requiring the assurance of reciprocity—let us take another step in the same direction, and, by a complete disarmament, convince them that for the future we rely upon moral reason, instead of physical force, as the means of deciding differences. I shall be glad, my dear boy, to repair the injury

which I have unfortunately done you, by contributing a sum equal to three times the amount required for the purchase of a company, towards your establishment as a partner in an exporting house, if you can hear of an eligible offer. Pray keep an eye on the advertising columns of the 'Economist.' That journal is in every way trustworthy, except, perhaps, when it deals in quotation. I must now conclude, as I have to attend a meeting for the purpose of denouncing the policy of Russia, and of warning the misguided capitalists of London against the perils of an Austrian loan. You cannot, I am sure, doubt my affection, but you must not expect me to advance my money towards keeping up a herd of locusts, without which there would be a general conversion of swords and bayonets into machinery —ploughshares, spades, and pruning-hooks being, for the present, rather at a discount.—I remain always your affectionate uncle,

"PETER PETTIGREW.

"*P. S.* — Address to me at Hesse Homberg, whither I am going as a delegate to the Peace Congress."

"Well, what do you think of that?" said Wilkinson, when I had finished this comfortable epistle. "I presume you agree with me, that I have no chance whatever of receiving assistance from that quarter."

"Why, not much I should say, unless you can succeed in convincing Mr Pettigrew of the error of his ways. It seems to me a regular case of monomania."

"Would you not suppose, after reading that letter, that I was a sort of sucking tiger, or at best an ogre, who never could sleep comfortably unless he had finished off the evening with a cup of gore?" said Wilkinson. "I like that coming from old Uncle Peter, who used to sing Rule Britannia till he was hoarse, and always dedicated his second glass of port to the health of the Duke of Wellington!"

"But what do you intend to do?" said I. "Will you accept his offer, and become a fabricator of calicoes?"

"I'd as soon become a field preacher, and hold forth on an inverted tub! But the matter is really very serious. In his present mood of mind, Uncle Peter will disinherit me to a certainty if I remain in the army."

"Does he usually adhere long to any particular crotchet?" said I.

"Why, no; and therein lies my hope. Judging from past experience, I should say that this fit is not likely to last above a month or two; still you see there may be danger in treating the matter too lightly: besides, there is no saying when such another opportunity of getting a step may occur. What would you advise under the circumstances?"

"If I were in your place," said I, "I think I should go over to Hesse Homberg at once. You need not identify yourself entirely with the Peace gentry; you will be near your uncle, and ready to act as circumstances may suggest."

"That is just my own notion; and I think I can obtain leave of absence. I say — could you not manage to go along with me? It would be a real act of friendship; for, to say the truth, I don't think I could trust any of our fellows in the company of the Quakers."

"Well—I believe they can spare me for a little longer from my official duties; and as the weather is fine, I don't mind if I go."

"That's a good fellow! I shall make my arrangements this evening; for the sooner we are off the better."

Two days afterwards we were steaming up the Rhine, a river which, I trust, may persevere in its attempt to redeem its ancient character. In 1848, when I visited Germany last, you might just as well have navigated the Phlegethon in so far as pleasure was concerned. Those were the days of barricades and of Frankfort murders—of the obscene German Parliament, as the junta of rogues, fanatics, and imbeciles, who were assembled in St Paul's Church, denominated themselves; and of every phase and form of political quackery and insurrection. Now, however, matters were some-

what mended. The star of Gagern had waned. The popularity of the Archduke John had exhaled like the fume of a farthing candle. Hecker and Struve were hanged, shot, or expatriated; and the peaceably disposed traveller could once more retire to rest in his hotel, without being haunted by a horrid suspicion that ere morning some truculent waiter might experiment upon the toughness of his larynx. I was glad to observe that the Frankforters appeared a good deal humbled. They were always a pestilent set; but during the revolutionary year their insolence rose to such a pitch that it was hardly safe for a man of warm temperament to enter a shop, lest he should be provoked by the airs and impertinence of the owner to commit an assault upon Freedom in the person of her democratic votary. I suspect the Frankforters are now tolerably aware that revolutions are the reverse of profitable. They escaped sack and pillage by a sheer miracle, and probably they will not again exert themselves, at least for a considerable number of years, to hasten the approach of a similar crisis.

Everybody knows Homberg. On one pretext or another—whether the mineral springs, the baths, the gaiety, or the gambling—the integral portions of that tide of voyagers which annually fluctuates through the Rheingau, find their way to that pleasant little pandemonium, and contribute, I

have no doubt, very largely to the revenues of that high and puissant monarch who rules over a population not quite so large as that comprehended within the boundaries of Clackmannan. But various as its visitors always are, and diverse in language, habits, and morals, I question whether Homberg ever exhibited on any previous occasion so queer and incongruous a mixture. Doubtful counts, apocryphal barons, and chevaliers of the extremest industry, mingled with sleek Quakers, Manchester reformers, and clerical agitators of every imaginable species of dissent. Then there were women, for the most part of a middle age, who, although their complexions would certainly have been improved by a course of the medicinal waters, had evidently come to Homberg on a higher and holier mission. There was also a sprinkling of French deputies — Red Republicans by principle, who, if not the most ardent friends of pacification, are at least the loudest in their denunciation of standing armies—a fair proportion of political exiles, who found their own countries too hot to hold them in consequence of the caloric which they had been the means of evoking—and one or two of those unhappy personages, whose itch for notoriety is greater than their modicum of sense. We were not long in finding Mr Peter Pettigrew. He was solacing himself in the gardens, previous to the table-d'hôte, by listening to

the exhilarating strains of the brass band which was performing a military march; and by his side was a lady attired, not in the usual costume of her sex, but in a polka jacket and wide trousers, which gave her all the appearance of a veteran duenna of a seraglio. Uncle Peter, however, beamed upon her as tenderly as though she were a Circassian captive. To this lady, by name Miss Lavinia Latchley, an American authoress of much renown, and a decided champion of the rights of woman, we were presented in due form. After the first greetings were over, Mr Pettigrew opened the trenches.

"So Jack, my boy, you have come to Homberg to see how we carry on the war, eh? No—Lord forgive me—that's not what I mean. We don't intend to carry on any kind of war: we mean to put it down—clap the extinguisher upon it, you know; and have done with all kinds of cannons. Bad thing, gunpowder! I once sustained a heavy loss by sending out a cargo of it to Sierra Leone."

"I should have thought that a paying speculation," observed Jack.

"Not a whit of it! The cruisers spoiled the trade; and the missionaries — confound them for meddling with matters which they did not understand!—had patched up a peace among the chiefs of the cannibals; so that for two years there was not a slave to be had for love or money, and

powder went down a hundred and seventy per cent."

"Such are the effects," remarked Miss Latchley with a sarcastic smile, which disclosed a row of teeth as yellow as the buds of the crocus—"such are the effects of an ill-regulated and unphilosophical yearning after the visionary theories of an unopportune emancipation! Oh that men, instead of squandering their sympathies upon the lower grades of creation, would emancipate themselves from that network of error and prejudice which reticulates over the whole surface of society, and by acknowledging the divine mission and hereditary claims of woman, construct a new, a fairer Eden than any which was fabled to exist within the confines of the primitive Chaldæa!"

"Very true, indeed, ma'am!" replied Mr Pettigrew; "there is a great deal of sound sense and observation in what you say. But Jack—I hope you intend to become a member of Congress at once. I shall be glad to present you at our afternoon meeting in the character of a converted officer."

"You are very good, uncle, I am sure," said Wilkinson, "but I would rather wait a little. I am certain you would not wish me to take so serious a step without mature deliberation; and I hope that my attendance here, in answer to your summons, will convince you that I am at least

open to conviction. In fact, I wish to hear the argument of your friends before I come to a definite decision."

"Very right, Jack; very right!" said Mr Pettigrew. "I don't like converts at a minute's notice, as I remarked to a certain M.P. when he followed in the wake of Peel. Take your time, and form your own judgment; I cannot doubt of the result, if you only listen to the arguments of the leading men of Europe."

"And do you reckon America as nothing, dear Mr Pettigrew?" said Miss Latchley. "Columbia may not be able to contribute to the task so practical and masculine an intellect as yours, yet still within many a transatlantic bosom burns a hate of tyranny not less intense, though perhaps less corruscating, than your own."

"I know it, I know it, dear Miss Latchley!" replied the infatuated Peter. "A word from you is at any time worth a lecture, at least if I may judge from the effects which your magnificent eloquence has produced on my own mind. Jack, I suppose you have never had the privilege of listening to the lectures of Miss Latchley?"

Jack modestly acknowledged the gap which had been left in his education; stating, at the same time, his intense desire to have it filled up at the first convenient opportunity. Miss Latchley heaved a sigh.

"I hope you do not flatter me," she said, "as is too much the case with men whose thoughts have been led habitually to deviate from sincerity. The worst symptom of the present age lies in its acquiescence with axioms. Free us from that, and we are free indeed; perpetuate its thraldom, and Truth, which is the daughter of Innocence and Liberty, imps its wings in vain, and cannot emancipate itself from the pressure of that raiment which was devised to impede its glorious walk among the nations."

Jack made no reply beyond a glance at the terminations of the lady, which showed that she at all events was resolved that no extra raiment should trammel her onward progress.

As the customary hour of the table-d'hôte was approaching, we separated, Jack and I pledging ourselves to attend the afternoon meeting of the Peace Congress, for the purpose of receiving our first lesson in the mysteries of pacification.

"Well, what do you think of that?" said Jack, as Mr Pettigrew and the Latchley walked off together. "Hang me if I don't suspect that old harpy in the breeches has a design on Uncle Peter!"

"Small doubt of that," said I; "and you will find it rather a difficult job to get him out of her clutches. Your female philosopher adheres to her victim with all the tenacity of a polecat."

"Here is a pretty business!" groaned Jack. "I'll tell you what it is—I have more than half a mind to put an end to it, by telling my uncle what I think of his conduct, and then leaving him to marry this harridan, and make a further fool of himself in any way he pleases!"

"Don't be silly, Jack!" said I; "it will be time enough to do that after everything else has failed; and, for my own part, I see no reason to despair. In the meantime, if you please, let us secure places at the dinner-table."

CHAPTER II.

"Dear friends and well-beloved brothers! I wish from the bottom of my heart that there was but one universal language, so that the general sentiments of love, equality, and fraternity, which animate the bosoms of all the pacificators and detesters of tyranny throughout the world, might find a simultaneous echo in your ears, by the medium of a common speech. The diversity of dialects, which now unfortunately prevails, was originally invented under cover of the feudal system, by the minions of despotism, who thought, by such despicable means, for ever to perpetuate their power. It is part of the same system which decrees that in different countries alien to each other in speech, those un-

happy persons who have sold themselves to do the bidding of tyrants shall be distinguished by different uniforms. O my brothers! see what a hellish and deep-laid system is here! English and French—scarlet against blue — different tongues invented, and different garments prescribed, to inflame the passions of mankind against each other, and to stifle their common fraternity!

"Take down, I say, from your halls and churches those wretched tatters of silk which you designate as national colours! Bring hither, from all parts of the earth, the butt of the gun and the shaft of the spear, and all combustible implements of destruction—your fascines, your scaling-ladders, and your terrible pontoons, that have made so many mothers childless! Heap them into one enormous pile — yea, heap them to the very stars — and on that blazing altar let there be thrown the Union Jack of Britain, the tricolor of France, the eagles of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, the American stripes and stars, and every other banner and emblem of that accursed nationality, through which alone mankind is defrauded of his birthright. Then let all men join hands together, and as they dance around the reeking pile, let them in one common speech chaunt a simultaneous hymn in honour of their universal deliverance, and in commemoration of their cosmopolitan triumph!

"O my brothers, O my brothers! what shall I

say further? Ha! I will not address myself to you whose hearts are already kindled within you by the purest of spiritual flames. I will uplift my voice, and in words of thunder exhort the debased minions of tyranny to arouse themselves ere it be too late, and to shake off those fetters which they wear for the purpose of enslaving others. Hear me, then, ye soldiers! — hear me, ye degraded serfs!—hear me, ye monsters of iniquity! Oh, if the earth could speak, what a voice would arise out of its desolate battle-fields, to testify against you and yours! Tell us not that you have fought for freedom. Was freedom ever won by the sword? Tell us not that you have defended your country's rights, for in the eye of the true philosopher there is no country save one, and that is the universal earth, to which all have an equal claim. Shelter not yourselves, night-prowling hyenas as you are, under such miserable pretexts as these! Hie ye to the charnel-houses, ye bats, ye vampires, ye ravens, ye birds of the foulest omen! Strive, if you can, in their dark recesses, to hide yourselves from the glare of that light which is now permeating the world. O the dawn! O the glory! O the universal illumination! See, my brothers, how they shrink, how they flee from its cheering influence! Tremble, minions of despotism! Your race is run, your very empires are tottering around you. See—with one grasp I crush them all, as I crush this flimsy scroll!"

Here the eloquent gentleman, having made a paper ball of the last number of the 'Allgemeine Zeitung,' sate down amidst the vociferous applause of the assembly. He was the first orator who had spoken, and I believe had been selected to lead the van on account of his platform experience, which was very great. I cannot say, however, that his arguments produced entire conviction upon my mind, or that of my companion, judging from certain muttered adjurations which fell from Wilkinson, to the effect that on the first convenient opportunity he would take means to make the crumpler-up of nations atone for his scurrilous abuse of the army. We were next favoured with addresses in Sclavonian, German, and French; and then another British orator came forward to enlighten the public. This last was a fellow of some fancy. Avoiding all stale topics about despotism, aristocracies, and standing armies, he went to the root of the matter, by asserting that in Vegetarianism alone lay the true escape from the horrors and miseries of war. Mr Belcher — for such was the name of this distinguished philanthropist — opined that without beef and mutton there never could be a battle.

"Had Napoleon," said he, "been dieted from his youth upwards upon turnips, the world would have been spared those scenes of butchery, which must ever remain a blot upon the history of the present

century. One of our oldest English annalists assures us that Jack Cade, than whom, perhaps, there never breathed a more uncompromising enemy of tyranny, subsisted entirely upon spinach. This fact has been beautifully treated by Shakespeare, whose passion for onions was proverbial, in his play of Henry VI., wherein he represents Cade, immediately before his death, as engaged in the preparation of a salad. I myself," continued Mr Belcher in a slightly flatulent tone, "can assure this honourable company, that for more than six months, I have cautiously abstained from using any other kind of food except broccoli, which I find at once refreshing and laxative, light, airy, and digestible!"

Mr Belcher having ended, a bearded gentleman, who enjoyed the reputation of being the most notorious duellist in Europe, rose up for the purpose of addressing the audience; but by this time the afternoon was considerably advanced, and a large number of the Congress had silently seceded to the *roulette* and *rouge-et-noir* tables. Among these, to my great surprise, were Miss Latchley and Mr Pettigrew: it being, as I afterwards understood, the invariable practice of this gifted lady, whenever she could secure a victim, to avail herself of his pecuniary resources; so that if fortune declared against her, the gentleman stood the loss, whilst, in the opposite event, she retained possession of

the spoil. I daresay some of my readers may have been witnesses to a similar arrangement.

As it was no use remaining after the departure of Mr Pettigrew, Wilkinson and I sallied forth for a stroll, not, as you may well conceive, in a high state of enthusiasm or rapture.

"I would not have believed," said Wilkinson, "unless I had seen it with my own eyes, that it was possible to collect in one room so many samples of absolute idiocy. What a pleasant companion that Belcher fellow, who eats nothing but broccoli, must be!"

"A little variety in the way of peas would probably render him perfect. But what do you say to the first orator?"

"I shall reserve the expression of my opinion," replied Jack, "until I have the satisfaction of meeting that gentleman in private. But how are we to proceed? With this woman in the way, it entirely baffles my comprehension."

"Do you know, Jack, I was thinking of that during the whole time of the meeting; and it does appear to me that there is a way open by which we may precipitate the crisis. Mind — I don't answer for the success of my scheme, but it has at least the merit of simplicity."

"Out with it, my dear fellow! I am all impatience," cried Jack.

"Well, then," said I, "did you remark the queer

and heterogeneous nature of the company? I don't think, if you except the Quakers, who have the generic similarity of eels, that you could have picked out any two individuals with a tolerable resemblance to each other."

"That's likely enough, for they are a most seedy set. But what of it?"

"Why, simply this: I suspect the majority of them are political refugees. No person, who is not an absurd fanatic or a designing demagogue, can have any sympathy with the nonsense which is talked against Governments and standing armies. The Red Republicans, of whom I can assure you there are plenty in every State in Europe, are naturally most desirous to get rid of the latter, by whom they are held in check; and if that were once accomplished, no kind of government could stand for a single day. They are now appealing, as they call it, to public opinion, by means of these congresses and gatherings; and they have contrived, under cover of a zeal for universal peace, to induce a considerable number of weak and foolish people to join with them in a cry which is simply the forerunner of revolution."

"All that I understand; but I don't quite see your drift."

"Every one of these bearded vagabonds hates the other like poison. Talk of fraternity, indeed! They want to have revolution first; and if they

could get it, you would see them flying at each other's throats like a pack of wild dogs that have pulled down a deer. Now, my plan is this: Let us have a supper-party, and invite a deputy from each nation. My life upon it, that before they have been half an hour together, there will be such a row among the fraternisers as will frighten your uncle Peter out of his senses, or, still better, out of his present crotchet."

"A capital idea! But how shall we get hold of the fellows?"

"That's not very difficult. They are at this moment hard at work at *roulette*, and they will come readily enough to the call if you promise them lots of Niersteiner."

"By George! they shall have it in bucketfuls, if that can produce the desired effect. I say—we must positively have that chap who abused the army."

"I think it would be advisable to let him alone. I would rather stick to the foreigners."

"Oh, by Jove, we must have him! I have a slight score to settle, for the credit of the service."

"Well, but be cautious. Recollect the great matter is to leave our guests to themselves."

"Never fear me. I shall take care to keep within due bounds. Now let us look after Uncle Peter."

We found that respected individual in a state of high glee. His own run of luck had not been ex-

traordinary; but the Latchley, who appeared to possess a sort of second-sight in fixing on the fortunate numbers, had contrived to accumulate a perfect mountain of dollars, to the manifest disgust of a profane Quaker opposite, who, judging from the violence of his language, had been thoroughly cleaned out. Mr Pettigrew agreed at once to the proposal for a supper-party, which Jack excused himself for making, on the ground that he had a strong wish to cultivate the personal acquaintance of the gentlemen, who, in the event of his joining the Peace Society, would become his brethren. After some pressing, Mr Pettigrew agreed to take the chair, his nephew officiating as croupier. Miss Lavinia Latchley, so soon as she learned what was in contemplation, made a strong effort to be allowed to join the party; but notwithstanding her assertion of the inalienable rights of woman to be present on all occasions of social hilarity, Jack would not yield; and even Pettigrew seemed to think that there were times and seasons when the female countenance might be withheld with advantage. We found no difficulty whatever in furnishing the complement of the guests. There were seventeen of us in all—four Britons, two Frenchmen, a Hungarian, a Lombard, a Piedmontese, a Sicilian, a Neapolitan, a Roman, an Austrian, a Prussian, a Dane, a Dutchman, and a Yankee. The majority exhibited beards of startling dimension, and few of

them appeared to regard soap in the light of a justifiable luxury.

Pettigrew made an admirable chairman. Although not conversant with any language save his own, he contrived, by means of altering the terminations of his words, to carry on a very animated conversation with all his neighbours. His Italian was superb, his Danish above par, and his Sclavonic, to say the least of it, passable. The viands were good, and the wine abundant; so that, by the time pipes were produced, we were all tolerably hilarious. The conversation, which at first was general, now took a political turn; and very grievous it was to listen to the tales of the outrages which some of the company had sustained at the hands of tyrannical Governments.

"I'll tell you what it is, gentlemen," said one of the Frenchmen, "republics are not a whit better than monarchies, in so far as the liberty of the people is concerned. Here am I obliged to leave France, because I was a friend of that gallant fellow, Ledru Rollin, whom I hope one day to see at the head of a real Socialist Government. Ah, won't we set the guillotine once more in motion then!"

"Property is theft," remarked the Neapolitan, sententiously.

"I calculate, my fine chap, that you han't many dollars of your own, if you're of that way of think-

ing!" said the Yankee, considerably scandalised at this indifference to the rule of *meum* and *tuum*.

"O Roma!" sighed the gentleman from the Eternal City, who was rather intoxicated.

"*Peste!* what is the matter with it?" asked one of the Frenchmen. "I presume it stands where it always did. *Garçon—un petit verre de rhom!*"

"How can Rome be what it was, when it is profaned by the foot of the stranger?" replied he of the Papal States.

"*Ah, bah!* you never were better off than under the rule of Oudinot."

"You are a German," said the Hungarian to the Austrian; "what think you of our brave Kossuth?"

"I consider him a pragmatical ass," replied the Austrian, curtly.

"Perhaps in that case," interposed the Lombard, with a sneer that might have done credit to Mephistopheles, "the gentleman may feel inclined to palliate the conduct of that satrap of tyranny, Radetski?"

"What!—old father Radetski! the victor in a hundred fights!" cried the Austrian; "that will I; and spit in the face of any cowardly Italian who dares to breathe a word against his honour!"

The Italian clutched his knife.

"Hold there!" cried the Piedmontese, who seemed really a decent sort of fellow. "None of your stiletto work here! Had you Lombards trusted more

to the bayonet and less to the knife, we might have given another account of the Austrian in that campaign, which cost Piedmont its king!"

"*Carlo Alberto!*" hissed the Lombard, "*sceleratissimo traditore!*"

The reply of the Piedmontese was a pie-dish, which prostrated the Lombard on the floor.

"Gentlemen! gentlemen! for heaven's sake, be calm!" screamed Pettigrew; "remember we are all brothers!"

"Brothers!" roared the Dane; "do ye think I would fraternise with a Prussian? Remember Schleswig-Holstein!"

"I am perfectly calm," said the Prussian, with the stiff formality of his nation; "I never quarrel over the generous vintage of my fatherland. Come —let me give you a song—

> 'Sie sollen ihm nicht haben
> Den Deutschen freien Rhein.'"

"You never were more mistaken in your life, *mon cher*," said one of the Frenchmen, brusquely. "Before twelve months are over we shall see who has right to the Rhine!"

"Ay, that is true!" remarked the Dutchman; "confound these Germans—they wanted to annex Luxembourg."

"What says the frog?" asked the Prussian, contemptuously.

The frog said nothing, but he hit the Prussian on the teeth.

I despair of giving even a feeble impression of the scene which took place. No single pair of ears was sufficient to catch one fourth of the general discord. There was first an interchange of angry words; then an interchange of blows; and immediately after, the guests were rolling, in groups of twos and threes, as suited their fancy, or the adjustment of national animosities, on the ground. The Lombard rose not again; the pie-dish had quieted him for the night. But the Sicilian and Neapolitan lay locked in deadly combat, each attempting with intense animosity to bite off the other's nose. The Austrian caught the Hungarian by the throat, and held him till he was black in the face. The Dane pommelled the Prussian. One of the Frenchmen broke a bottle over the head of the subject of the Pope; whilst his friend, thirsting for the combat, attempted in vain to insult the remaining non-belligerents. The Dutchman having done all that honour required, smoked in mute tranquillity. Meanwhile the cries of Uncle Peter were heard above the din of battle, entreating a cessation of hostilities. He might as well have preached to the storm—the row grew fiercer every moment.

"This is a disgusting spectacle!" said the orator from Manchester. "These men cannot be true pacificators—they must have served in the army."

"That reminds me, old fellow!" said Jack, turning up the cuffs of his coat with a very ominous expression of countenance, "that you were pleased this morning to use some impertinent expressions with regard to the British army. Do you adhere to what you said then?"

"I do."

"Then up with your mauleys; for, by the Lord Harry! I intend to have satisfaction out of your carcass!"

And in less than a minute the Manchester apostle dropped with both his eyes bunged up, and did not come to time.

"Stranger!" said the Yankee to the Piedmontese, "are you inclined for a turn at gouging? This child feels wolfish to raise hair!" But, to his credit be it said, the Piedmontese declined the proposal with a polite bow. Meanwhile the uproar had attracted the attention of the neighbourhood. Six or seven men in uniform, whom I strongly suspect to have been members of the brass band, entered the apartment armed with bayonets, and carried off the more obstreperous of the party to the guard-house. The others immediately retired, and at last Jack and I were left alone with Mr Pettigrew.

"And this," said he, after a considerable pause, "is fraternity and peace! These are the men who intended to commence the reign of the millennium in Europe! Give me your hand, Jack, my dear boy—

you shan't leave the army—nay, if you do, rely upon it I shall cut you off with a shilling, and mortify my fortune to the Woolwich Hospital. I begin to see that I am an old fool. Stop a moment. Here is a bottle of wine that has fortunately escaped the devastation—fill your glasses, and let us dedicate a full bumper to the health of the Duke of Wellington."

I need hardly say that the toast was responded to with enthusiasm. We finished not only that bottle, but another; and I had the satisfaction of hearing Mr Pettigrew announce to my friend Wilkinson that the purchase-money for his company would be forthcoming at Coutts's before he was a fortnight older.

"I won't affect to deny," said Uncle Peter, "that this is a great disappointment to me. I had hoped better things of human nature; but I now perceive that I was wrong. Good night, my dear boys! I am a good deal agitated, as you may see; and perhaps this sour wine has not altogether agreed with me—I had better have taken brandy-and-water. I shall seek refuge on my pillow, and I trust we may soon meet again!"

"What did the venerable Peter mean by that impressive farewell?" said I, after the excellent old man had departed, shaking his head mournfully as he went.

"Oh, nothing at all," said Jack; "only the Nier-

steiner has been rather too potent for him. Have you any sticking-plaster about you? I have damaged my knuckles a little on the *os frontis* of that eloquent pacificator."

Next morning I was awoke about ten o'clock by Jack, who came rushing into my room.

"He's off!" he cried.

"Who's off?" said I.

"Uncle Peter; and, what is far worse, he has taken Miss Latchley with him."

"Impossible!"

However, it was perfectly true. On inquiry we found that the enamoured pair had left at six in the morning.

CHAPTER III.

"Well, Jack," said I, "any tidings of Uncle Peter?" as Wilkinson entered my official apartment in London, six weeks after the dissolution of the Congress.

"Why, yes—and the case is rather worse than I supposed," replied Jack, despondingly.

"You don't mean to say that he has married that infernal woman in pantaloons?"

"Not quite so bad as that, but very nearly. She has carried him off to her den; and what she may make of him there, it is quite impossible to predict."

"Her den? Has she actually inveigled him to America?"

"Not at all. These kind of women have stations established over the whole face of the earth."

"Where, then, is he located?"

"I shall tell you. In the course of my inquiries, which, you are aware, were rather extensive, I chanced to fall in with a Yarmouth Bloater."

"A what?"

"I beg your pardon—I meant to say a Plymouth Brother. Now, these fellows are a sort of regular kidnappers, who lie in wait to catch up any person of means and substance: they don't meddle with paupers, for, as you are aware, they share their property in common: and it occurred to me rather forcibly, that by means of my friend, who was a regular trapping missionary, I might learn something about my uncle. It cost me an immensity of brandy to elicit the information; but at last I succeeded in bringing out the fact, that my uncle is at this moment the inmate of an Agapedome in the neighbourhood of Southampton, and that the Latchley is his appointed keeper."

"An Agapedome!—what the mischief is that?"

"You may well ask," said Jack; "but I won't give it a coarser name. However, from all I can learn, it is as bad as a Mormonite institution."

"And what the deuce may they intend to do with him, now they have him in their power?"

"Fleece him out of every sixpence of property which he possesses in the world," replied Jack.

"That won't do, Jack! We must get him out by some means or other."

"I suspect it would be an easier job to scale a nunnery. So far as I can learn, they admit no one into their premises, unless they have hopes of catching him as a convert; and I am afraid that neither you nor I have the look of likely pupils. Besides, the Latchley could not fail to recognise me in a moment."

"That's true enough," said I. "I think, however, that I might escape detection by a slight alteration of attire. The lady did not honour me with much notice during the half-hour we spent in her company. I must own, however, that I should not like to go alone."

"My dear friend!" cried Jack, "if you will really be kind enough to oblige me in this matter, I know the very man to accompany you. Rogers of ours is in town just now. He is a famous fellow—rather fast, perhaps, and given to larking—but as true as steel. You shall meet him to-day at dinner, and then we can arrange our plans."

I must own that I did not feel very sanguine of success this time. Your genuine rogue is the most suspicious character on the face of the earth, wide awake to a thousand little discrepancies which would escape the observation of the honest; and I

felt perfectly convinced that the superintendent of the Agapedome was likely to prove a rogue of the first water. Then I did not see my way clearly to the characters which we ought to assume. Of course, it was no use for me to present myself as a scion of the Woods and Forests; I should be treated as a Government spy, and have the door slapped in my face. To appear as an emissary of the Jesuits would be dangerous—that body being well known for their skill in annexing property. In short, I came to the conclusion, that unless I could work upon the cupidity of the head Agapedomian, there was no chance whatever of effecting Mr Pettigrew's release. To this point, therefore, I resolved to turn my attention.

At dinner, according to agreement, I met Rogers of ours. Rogers was not gifted with any powerful inventive faculties; but he was a fine specimen of the British breed, ready to take a hand at anything which offered a prospect of fun. You would not probably have selected him as a leading conspirator; but, though no Macchiavelli, he appeared most valuable as an accomplice.

Our great difficulty was to pitch upon proper characters. After much discussion, it was resolved that Rogers of ours should appear as a young nobleman of immense wealth, but exceedingly eccentric habits, and that I should act as bear-leader, with an eye to my own interest. What we were to do

when we should succeed in getting admission to the establishment, was not very clear to the perception of any of us. We resolved to be regulated entirely by circumstances, the great point being the rescue of Mr Peter Pettigrew.

Accordingly, we all started for Southampton on the following morning. On arriving there, we were informed that the Agapedome was situated some three miles from the town, and that the most extraordinary legends of the habits and pursuits of its inmates were current in the neighbourhood. Nobody appeared to know exactly what the Agapedomians were. They seemed to constitute a tolerably large society of persons, both male and female; but whether they were Christians, Turks, Jews, or Mohammedans, was matter of exceeding disputation. They were known, however, to be rich, and occasionally went out airing in carriages-and-four—the women all wearing pantaloons, to the infinite scandal of the peasantry. So far as we could learn, no gentleman answering to the description of Mr Pettigrew had been seen among them.

After agreeing to open communications with Jack as speedily as possible, and emptying a bottle of champagne towards the success of our expedition, Rogers and I started in a postchaise for the Agapedome. Rogers was curiously arrayed in garments of checkered plaid, a mere glance at which would have gone far to impress any spectator with

a strong notion of his eccentricity; whilst, for my part, I had donned a suit of black, and assumed a massive pair of gold spectacles, and a beaver with a portentous rim.

This Agapedome was a large building surrounded by a high wall, and looked, upon the whole, like a convent. Deeming it prudent to ascertain how the land lay before introducing the eccentric Rogers, I requested that gallant individual to remain in the postchaise, whilst I solicited an interview with Mr Aaron B. Hyams, the reputed chief of the establishment. The card I sent in was inscribed with the name of Dr Hiram Smith, which appeared to me a sufficiently innocuous appellation. After some delay, I was admitted through a very strong gateway into the courtyard; and was then conducted by a servant in a handsome livery to a library, where I was received by Mr Hyams.

As the Agapedome has since been broken up, and its members dispersed, it may not be uninteresting to put on record a slight sketch of its founder. Judging from his countenance, the progenitors of Mr Aaron B. Hyams must have been educated in the Jewish persuasion. His nose and lip possessed that graceful curve which is so characteristic of the Hebrew race; and his eye, if not altogether of that kind which the poets designate as "eagle," might not inaptly be compared to that of the turkey-buzzard. In certain circles of society Mr Hyams would

have been esteemed a handsome man. In the doorway of a warehouse in Holywell Street he would have committed large havoc on the hearts of the passing Leahs and Delilahs—for he was a square-built powerful man, with broad shoulders and bandy legs, and displayed on his person as much ostentatious jewellery as though he had been concerned in a new spoiling of the Egyptians. Apparently he was in a cheerful mood; for before him stood a half-emptied decanter of wine, and an odour as of recently extinguished Cubas was agreeably disseminated through the apartment.

"Dr Hiram Smith, I presume?" said he. "Well, Dr Hiram Smith, to what fortunate circumstance am I indebted for the honour of this visit?"

"Simply, sir, to this," said I, "that I want to know you, and know about you. Nobody without can tell me precisely what your Agapedome is, so I have come for information to headquarters. I have formed my own conclusion. If I am wrong, there is no harm done; if I am right, we may be able to make a bargain."

"Hallo!" cried Hyams, taken rather aback by this curt style of exordium, "you are a rum customer, I reckon. So you want to deal, do ye? Well, then, tell us what sort of doctor you may be? No use standing on ceremony with a chap like you. Is it M.D. or LL.D. or D.D., or a mere walking-stick title?"

"The title," said I, "is conventional; so you may attribute it to any origin you please. In brief, I want to know if I can board a pupil here?"

"That depends entirely upon circumstances," replied Hyams. "Who and what is the subject?"

"A young nobleman of the highest distinction, but of slightly eccentric habits." Here Hyams pricked up his ears. "I am not authorised to tell his name; but otherwise, you shall have the most satisfactory references."

"There is only one kind of reference I care about," interrupted Hyams, imitating at the same time the counting out of imaginary sovereigns into his palm.

"So much the better — there will be trouble saved," said I. "I perceive, Mr Hyams, you are a thorough man of business. In a word, then, my pupil has been going it too fast."

"Flying kites and post-obits?"

"And all the rest of it," said I; "blacklegs innumerable, and no end of scrapes in the green-room. Things have come to such a pass that his father, the Duke, insists on his being kept out of the way at present; and as taking him to Paris would only make matters worse, it occurred to me that I might locate him for a time in some quiet but cheerful establishment, where he could have his reasonable swing, and no questions asked."

"Dr Hiram Smith!" cried Hyams, with enthusi-

asm, "you're a regular trump! I wish all the noblemen in England would look out for tutors like you."

"You are exceedingly complimentary, Mr Hyams. And now that you know my errand, may I ask what the Agapedome is?"

"The Home of Love," replied Hyams; "at least so I was told by the Oxford gent, to whom I gave half-a-guinea for the title."

"And your object?"

"A pleasant retreat—comfortable home—no sort of bother or ceremony—innocent attachments encouraged—and, in the general case, community of goods."

"Of which latter, I presume, Mr Hyams is the sole administrator?"

"Right again, Doctor!" said Hyams, with a leer of intelligence; "no use beating about the bush with you, I perceive. A single cashier for the whole concern saves a world of unnecessary trouble. Then, you see, we have our little matrimonial arrangements. A young lady in search of an eligible domicile comes here and deposits her fortune. We provide her by-and-by with a husband of suitable tastes, so that all matters are arranged comfortably. No luxury or enjoyment is denied to the inmates of the establishment, which may be compared, in short, to a perfect aviary, in which you hear nothing from morning to evening save one continuous sound of billing and cooing."

"You draw a fascinating picture, Mr Hyams," said I: "too fascinating, in fact; for, after what you have said, I doubt whether I should be fulfilling my duty to my noble patron the Duke, were I to expose his heir to the influence of such powerful temptations."

"Don't be in the least degree alarmed about that," said Hyams. "I shall take care that in this case there is no chance of marriage. Harkye, Doctor, it is rather against our rules to admit parlour boarders; but I don't mind doing it in this case, if you agree to my terms, which are one hundred and twenty guineas per month."

"On the part of the Duke," said I, "I anticipate no objection; nor shall I refuse your stamped receipts at that rate. But as I happen to be paymaster, I shall certainly not give you in exchange for each of them more than seventy guineas, which will leave you a very pretty profit over and above your expenses."

"What a screw you are, Doctor!" cried Hyams. "Would you have the conscience to pocket fifty for nothing? Come, come—make it eighty and it's a bargain."

"Seventy is my last word. Beard of Mordecai, man! do you think I am going to surrender this pigeon to your hands gratis? Have I not told you already that he has a natural turn for *ecarté!*"

"Ah, Doctor, Doctor! you must be one of our

people—you must indeed!" said Hyams. "Well, is it a bargain?"

"Not yet," said I. "In common decency, and for the sake of appearances, I must stay for a couple of days in the house, in order that I may be able to give a satisfactory report to the Duke. By the way, I hope everything is quite orthodox here—nothing contrary to the tenets of the Church?"

"Oh, quite," replied Hyams; "it is a beautiful establishment in point of order. The bell rings every day punctually at four o'clock."

"For prayers?"

"No, sir—for hockey. We find that a little lively exercise gives a cheerful tone to the mind, and promotes those animal spirits which are the peculiar boast of the Agapedome."

"I am quite satisfied," said I. "So now, if you please, I shall introduce my pupil."

I need not dwell minutely upon the particulars of the interview which took place between Rogers of ours and the superintendent of the Agapedome. Indeed there is little to record. Rogers received the intimation that this was to be his residence for a season with the utmost *nonchalance*, simply remarking that he thought it would be rather slow; and then, by way of keeping up his character, filled himself a bumper of sherry. Mr Hyams regarded him as a spider might do when some unknown but rather powerful insect comes within the precincts of his net.

"Well," said Rogers, "since it seems I am to be quartered here, what sort of fun is to be had? Any racket-court, eh?"

"I am sorry to say, my Lord, ours is not built as yet. But at four o'clock we shall have hockey——"

"Hang hockey! I have no fancy for getting my shins bruised. Anybody in the house except myself?"

"If your Lordship would like to visit the ladies——"

"Say no more!" cried Rogers, impetuously. "I shall manage to kill time now! Hallo, you fellow with the shoulder-knot! show me the way to the drawing-room;" and Rogers straightway disappeared.

"Doctor Hiram Smith!" said Hyams, looking rather discomposed, "this is most extraordinary conduct on the part of your pupil."

"Not at all extraordinary, I assure you," I replied; "I told you he was rather eccentric, but at present he is in a peculiarly quiet mood. Wait till you see his animal spirits up!"

"Why, he'll be the ruin of the Agapedome!" cried Hyams; "I cannot possibly permit this."

"It will rather puzzle you to stop it," said I.

Here a faint squall, followed by a sound of suppressed giggling, was heard in the passage without.

"Holy Moses!" cried the Agapedomian, starting up, "if Mrs Hyams should happen to be there!"

"You may rely upon it she will very soon become

accustomed to his Lordship's eccentricities. Why, you told me you admitted of no sort of bother or ceremony."

"Yes—but a joke may be carried too far. As I live, he is pursuing one of the ladies down-stairs into the courtyard!"

"Is he?" said I; "then you may be tolerably certain he will overtake her."

"Surely some of the servants will stop him!" cried Hyams, rushing to the window. "Yes—here comes one of them. Father Abraham! is it possible? He has knocked Adoniram down!"

"Nothing more likely," said I; "his Lordship had lessons from Mendoza."

"I must look to this myself," cried Hyams.

"Then I'll follow and see fair-play," said I.

We rushed into the court; but by this time it was empty. The pursued and the pursuer—Daphne and Apollo—had taken flight into the garden. Thither we followed them, Hyams red with ire; but no trace was seen of the fugitives. At last in an acacia bower we heard murmurs. Hyams dashed on; I followed; and there, to my unutterable surprise, I beheld Rogers of ours kneeling at the feet of the Latchley!

"Beautiful Lavinia!" he was saying, just as we turned the corner.

"Sister Latchley!" cried Hyams, "what is the meaning of all this?"

"Rather let me ask, brother Hyams," said the Latchley, in unabashed serenity, "what means this intrusion, so foreign to the time, and so subversive of the laws of our society?"

"Shall I pound him, Lavinia?" said Rogers, evidently anxious to discharge a slight modicum of the debt which he owed to the Jewish fraternity.

"I command—I beseech you, no! Speak, brother Hyams! I again require of you to state why and wherefore you have chosen to violate the fundamental rules of the Agapedome?"

"Sister Latchley, you will drive me mad! This young man has not been ten minutes in the house, and yet I find him scampering after you like a tom-cat, and knocking down Adoniram because he came in his way, and you are apparently quite pleased!"

"Is the influence of love measured by hours?" asked the Latchley, in a tone of deep sentiment. "Count we electricity by time—do we mete out sympathy by the dial? Brother Hyams, were not your intellectual vision obscured by a dull and earthly film, you would know that the passage of the lightning is not more rapid than the flash of kindled love."

"That sounds all very fine," said Hyams, "but I shall allow no such doings here; and you, in particular, Sister Latchley, considering how you are situated, ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

"Aaron, my man," said Rogers of ours, "will

you be good enough to explain what you mean by making such insinuations?"

"Stay, my Lord," said I; "I really must interpose. Mr Hyams is about to explain."

"May I never discount bill again," cried the Jew, "if this is not enough to make a man forswear the faith of his fathers! Look you here, Miss Latchley; you are part of the establishment, and I expect you to obey orders."

"I was not aware, sir, until this moment," said Miss Latchley, loftily, "that I was subject to the orders of any one."

"Now, don't be a fool; there's a dear!" said Hyams. "You know well enough what I mean. Haven't you enough on hand with Pettigrew, without encumbering yourself——?" and he stopped short.

"It is a pity, sir," said Miss Latchley, still more magnificently—"it is a vast pity, that since you have the meanness to invent falsehoods, you cannot at the same time command the courage to utter them. Why am I thus insulted? Who is this Pettigrew you speak of?"

"Pettigrew—Pettigrew?" remarked Rogers; "I say, Dr Smith, was not that the name of the man who is gone amissing, and for whose discovery his friends are offering a reward?"

Hyams started as if stung by an adder. "Sister Latchley," he said, "I fear I was in the wrong."

"You have made the discovery rather too late, Mr Hyams," replied the irate Lavinia. "After the insults you have heaped upon me, it is full time we should part. Perhaps these gentlemen will be kind enough to conduct an unprotected female to a temporary home."

"If you will go, you go alone, madam," said Hyams; "his Lordship intends to remain here."

"His Lordship intends to do nothing of the sort, you rascal," said Rogers. "Hockey don't agree with my constitution."

"Before I depart, Mr Hyams," said Miss Latchley, "let me remark that you are indebted to me in the sum of two thousand pounds, as my share of the profits of the establishment. Will you pay it now, or would you prefer to wait till you hear from my solicitor?"

"Anything more?" asked the Agapedomian.

"Merely this," said I: "I am now fully aware that Mr Peter Pettigrew is detained within these walls. Surrender him instantly, or prepare yourself for the worst penalties of the law."

I made a fearful blunder in betraying my secret before I was clear of the premises, and the words had scarcely passed my lips before I was aware of my mistake. With the look of a detected demon, Hyams confronted us.

"Ho, ho! this is a conspiracy, is it? But you have reckoned without your host. Ho, there!

Jonathan—Asahel! close the doors, ring the great bell, and let no man pass on your lives! And now let's see what stuff you are made of!"

So saying, the ruffian drew a life-preserver from his pocket, and struck furiously at my head before I had time to guard myself. But quick as he was, Rogers of ours was quicker. With his left hand he caught the arm of Hyams as the blow descended, whilst with the right he dealt him a fearful blow on the temple, which made the Hebrew stagger. But Hyams, amongst his other accomplishments, had practised in the ring. He recovered himself almost immediately, and rushed upon Rogers. Several heavy hits were interchanged; and there is no saying how the combat might have terminated, but for the presence of mind of the Latchley. That gifted female, superior to the weakness of her sex, caught up the life-preserver from the ground, and applied it so effectually to the back of Hyam's skull, that he dropped like an ox in the slaughter-house.

Meanwhile the alarm-bell was ringing—women were screaming at the windows, from which also several crazy-looking gentlemen were gesticulating; and three or four truculent Israelites were rushing through the courtyard. The whole Agapedome was in an uproar.

"Keep together and fear nothing!" cried Rogers. "I never stir on these kind of expeditions without

my pistols. Smith—give your arm to Miss Latchley, who has behaved like the heroine of Saragossa; and now let us see if any of these scoundrels will venture to dispute our way!"

But for the firearms which Rogers carried, I suspect our egress would have been disputed. Jonathan and Asahel, red-headed ruffians both, stood ready with iron bars in their hands to oppose our exit; but a glimpse of the bright glittering barrel caused them to change their purpose. Rogers commanded them, on pain of instant death, to open the door. They obeyed; and we emerged from the Agapedome as joyfully as the Ithacans from the cave of Polyphemus. Fortunately the chaise was still in waiting: we assisted Miss Latchley in, and drove off, as fast as the horses could gallop, to Southampton.

CHAPTER IV.

"Is it possible they can have murdered him?" said Jack.

"That, I think," said I, "is highly improbable. I rather imagine that he has refused to conform to some of the rules of the association, and has been committed to the custody of Messrs Jonathan and Asahel."

"Shall I ask Lavinia?" said Rogers. "I daresay she would tell me all about it."

"Better not," said I, "in the meantime. Poor thing! her nerves must be shaken."

"Not a whit of them," replied Rogers. "I saw no symptom of nerves about her. She was as cool as a cucumber when she floored that infernal Jew; and if she should be a little agitated or so, she is calming herself at this moment with a glass of brandy-and-water. I mixed it for her. Do you know she's a capital fellow, only 'tis a pity she's so very plain."

"I wish the police would arrive!" said Jack. "We have really not a minute to lose. Poor Uncle Peter! I devoutly trust this may be the last of his freaks."

"I hope so too, Jack, for your sake: it is no joke rummaging him out of such company. But for Rogers there, we should all of us have been as dead as pickled herrings."

"I bear a charmed life," said Rogers. "Remember I belong to 'the Immortals.' But there come the blue-coats in a couple of carriages. 'Gad, Wilkinson, I wish it were our luck to storm the Agapedome with a score of our own fellows!"

During our drive, Rogers enlightened us as to his encounter with the Latchley. It appeared that he had bestowed considerable attention to our conversation in London; and that, when he hurried to the drawing-room in the Agapedome, as already related, he thought he recognised the Latchley at once, in the midst of half-a-dozen more juvenile and blooming sisters.

"Of course I never read a word of the woman's works," said Rogers, "and I hope I never shall; but I know that female vanity will stand any amount of butter. So I bolted into the room, without caring for the rest—though, by the way, there was one little girl with fair hair and blue eyes, who, I hope, has not left the Agapedome—threw myself at the feet of Lavinia; declared that I was a young nobleman, enamoured of her writings, who was resolved to force my way through iron bars to gain a glimpse of the bright original: and, upon the whole, I think you must allow that I managed matters rather successfully."

There could be but one opinion as to that. In fact, without Rogers, the whole scheme must have miscarried. It was Kellermann's charge, unexpected and unauthorised—but altogether triumphant.

On arriving at the Agapedome we found the door open, and three or four peasants loitering round the gateway.

"Are they here still?" cried Jack, springing from the chaise.

"Noa, measter," replied one of the bystanders; "they be gone an hour past in four carrutches, wi' all their goods and chuckles."

"Did they carry any one with them by force?"

"Noa, not by force, as I seed; but there wore one chap among them woundily raddled on the sconce."

"Hyams to wit, I suppose. Come, gentlemen;

as we have a search-warrant, let us in and examine the premises thoroughly."

Short as was the interval which had elapsed between our exit and return, Messrs Jonathan, Asahel, and Co. had availed themselves of it to the utmost. Every portable article of any value had been removed. Drawers were open, and papers scattered over the floors, along with a good many pairs of bloomers rather the worse for the wear: in short, everything seemed to indicate that the nest was finally abandoned. What curious discoveries we made during the course of our researches, as to the social habits and domestic economy of this happy family, I shall not venture to recount; we came there not to gratify either private or public curiosity, but to perform a sacred duty by emancipating Mr Peter Pettigrew.

Neither in the cellars nor the closets, nor even in the garrets, could we find any trace of the lost one. The contents of one bedroom, indeed, showed that it had been formerly tenanted by Mr Pettigrew, for there were his portmanteaus with his name engraved upon them; his razors, and his wearing apparel, all seemingly untouched: but there were no marks of any recent occupancy; the dust was gathering on the table, and the ewer perfectly dry. It was the opinion of the detective officer that at least ten days had elapsed since any one had slept in the room. Jack became greatly alarmed.

"I suppose," said he, "there is nothing for it but to proceed immediately in pursuit of Hyams: do you think you will be able to apprehend him?"

"I doubt it very much, sir," replied the detective officer. "These sort of fellows are wide awake, and are always prepared for accidents. I expect that, by this time, he is on his way to France. But hush! —what was that?"

A dull sound as of the clapper of a large bell boomed overhead. There was silence for about a minute, and again it was repeated.

"Here is a clue, at all events!" cried the officer. "My life on it, there is some one in the belfry."

We hastened up the narrow stairs which led to the tower. Half-way up, the passage was barred by a stout door, double locked, which the officer had some difficulty in forcing with the aid of a crow-bar. This obstacle removed, we reached the lofty room where the bell was suspended; and there, right under the clapper, on a miserable truckle-bed, lay the emaciated form of Mr Pettigrew.

"My poor uncle!" said Jack, stooping tenderly to embrace his relative, "what can have brought you here?"

"Speak louder, Jack!" said Mr Pettigrew; "I can't hear you. For twelve long days that infernal bell has been tolling just above my head for hockey and other villanous purposes. I am as deaf as a door-nail!"

"And so thin, dear uncle! You must have been most shamefully abused."

"Simply starved; that's all."

"What! starved? The monsters! Did they give you nothing to eat?"

"Yes—broccoli. I wish you would try it for a week: it is a rare thing to bring out the bones."

"And why did they commit this outrage upon you?"

"For two especial reasons, I suppose—first, because I would not surrender my whole property; and, secondly, because I would not marry Miss Latchley."

"My dear uncle! when I saw you last, it appeared to me that you would have had no objections to perform the latter ceremony."

"Not on compulsion, Jack—not on compulsion!" said Mr Pettigrew, with a touch of his old humour. "I won't deny that I was humbugged by her at first, but this was over long ago."

"Indeed! Pray, may I venture to ask what changed your opinion of the lady?"

"Her works, Jack—her own works!" replied Uncle Peter. "She gave me them to read as soon as I was fairly trapped into the Agapedome, and such an awful collection of impiety and presumption I never saw before. She is ten thousand times worse than the deceased Thomas Paine."

"Was she, then, party to your incarceration?"

"I won't say that. I hardly think she would have consented to let them harm me, or that she knew exactly how I was used; but that fellow Hyams is wicked enough to have been an officer under King Herod. Now, pray help me up, and lift me down-stairs, for my legs are so cramped that I can't walk, and my head is as dizzy as a wheel. That confounded broccoli, too, has disagreed with my constitution, and I shall feel particularly obliged to any one who can assist me to a drop of brandy."

After having ministered to the immediate wants of Mr Pettigrew, and secured his effects, we returned to Southampton, leaving the deserted Agapedome in the charge of a couple of police. In spite of every entreaty, Mr Pettigrew would not hear of entering a prosecution against Hyams.

"I feel," said he, "that I have made a thorough ass of myself; and I should not be able to stand the ridicule that must follow a disclosure of the consequences. In fact, I begin to think that I am not fit to look after my own affairs. The man who has spent twelve days, as I have, under the clapper of a bell, without any other sustenance than broccoli — is there any more brandy in the flask? I should like the merest drop,—the man, I say, who has undergone these trials, has ample time for meditation upon the past. I see my weakness, and I acknowledge it. So Jack, my dear boy, as

you have always behaved to me more like a son than a nephew, I intend, immediately on my return to London, to settle my whole property upon you, merely reserving an annuity. Don't say a word on the subject. My mind is made up, and nothing can alter my resolution."

On arrival at Southampton we considered it our duty to communicate immediately with Miss Latchley, for the purpose of ascertaining if we could render her any temporary assistance. Perhaps it was more than she deserved; but we could not forget her sex, though she had done everything in her power to disguise it; and besides, the lucky blow with the life-preserver which she administered to Hyams, was a service for which we could not be otherwise than grateful. Jack Wilkinson was selected as the medium of communication. He found the strong Lavinia alone, and perfectly composed.

"I wish never more," said she, "to hear the name of Pettigrew. It is associated in my mind with weakness, fanaticism, and vacillation; and I shall ever feel humbled at the reflection that I bowed my woman's pride to gaze on the surface of so shallow and opaque a pool! And yet, why regret? The image of the sun is reflected equally from the Bœotian marsh and the mirror of the clear Ontario! Tell your uncle," continued she, after a pause, "that as he is nothing to me, so I wish to

be nothing to him. Let us mutually extinguish memory. Ha, ha, ha!—so they fed him, you say, upon broccoli?

"But I have one message to give, though not to him. The youth who, in the nobility of his soul, declared his passion for my intellect—where is he? I tarry beneath this roof but for him. Do my message fairly, and say to him that if he seeks a communion of soul—no! that is the common phrase of the slaves of antiquated superstition—if he yearns for a grand amalgamation of essential passion and power, let him hasten hither, and Lavinia Latchley is ready to accompany him to the prairie or the forest, to the torrid zone or to the confines of the arctic seas!"

"I shall deliver your message, ma'am," said Jack, "as accurately as my abilities will allow." And he did so.

Rogers of ours writhed uneasily in his seat.

"I'll tell you what it is, my fine fellows," said he; "I don't look upon this quite as a laughing matter. I am really sorry to have taken in the old woman, though I don't see how we could well have helped it; and I would far rather, Jack, that she had fixed her affections upon you than on me. I shall get infernally roasted at the mess if this story should transpire. However, I suppose there's only one answer to be given. Pray, present my most humble respects, and say how exceedingly distressed I feel

that my professional engagements will not permit me to accompany her in her proposed expedition."

Jack reported the answer in duo form.

"Then," said Lavinia, drawing herself up to her full height, and shrouding her visage in a black veil, "tell him that for his sake I am resolved to die a virgin!"

I presume she will keep her word; at least I have not yet heard that any one has been courageous enough to request her to change her situation. She has since returned to America, and is now, I believe, the president of a female college, the students of which may be distinguished from the rest of their sex by their uniform adoption of bloomers.

MAGA'S BIRTHDAY.

ÆTATIS, FIVE HUNDRED.

[*MAGA.* JUNE 1857.]

[These verses, written by the late LORD NEAVES, appeared in the five-hundredth number of "MAGA."]

DEAR reader of MAGA, to whom it is given
To feast on the Number for June, fifty-seven,—
Cast your eye on the cover, and there you will see
(On the title page also) a mystical D.
Right over the head of Buchanan the sage,
Appears that astounding announcement of age;
Proclaiming that MAGA now dazzles the earth,
For the FIVE-HUNDREDTH time since the hour of her birth!

Far back though the date of her origin be,
Yet never an infant or nursling was she!
Full-clad and accoutred she stepped on the plain,
Like Minerva when springing from Jupiter's brain.
For beauty, and wisdom, and strength were her dower,
And a voice that was thrilling with passion and power:
As Bradamant fearless, as Britomart bold,
So rose the bright virgin in armour of gold!

She spoke—and her words were so witching and sweet,
That thousands knelt down at her conquering feet.
She sang—and her lay was so melting and clear,
Like the nightingale's note when the morning is near,
That the hearts of the sternest grew soften'd and mild,
And they said, as they gazed on the wonderful child,
"Was ever so peerless a paragon seen?
Let's crown her with laurel,—let MAGA be Queen!"

All things that were loathsome and guilty and vile,
They quailed at her glance, and they shrunk from her smile,
They fled from her sceptre in terror and fear,
For its touch was like that of Ithuriel's spear.
And Falsehood and Quackery, rampant till then,
Scowled fiercely upon her and skulked to their den,
And impotent Envy drew off to a side,
As Maga swept by in her pomp and her pride.

Years passed; but no wrinkle was writ on her brow,
It was fair at her birth, it is beautiful now;
And round her was marshalled a generous band
Of sages and poets, the first in the land,
Of masters whose words, like the dew of the night,
Brought healing, and comfort, and balm, and delight.
Oh never since Arthur's round Table was seen,
Has so gallant a fellowship circled a Queen!

When blew the loud trump as the signal of war,
And MAGA in majesty came from afar,
Then dread and dismay smote the Radical clan,
For they knew the brave banner displayed in the van;
And the Balaks of Whiggery, trembling and pale,
Sent messengers off by the post or the rail,
To bid their false prophets, their Balaams, or worse,
Essay to extinguish the maid with a curse.

But curses, like stones when they upwards are thrown,
Fall back on the heads of the casters alone ;
And sad was the plight of the self-stricken crew,
As battered and lame from the field they withdrew.
Still flaunted her banner, still first was it found,
When the eddies of battle were raging around ;
And the shafts of the foemen, though heavy as hail,
Ne'er lit on a rivet or chink of her mail.

When Pallas and Juno came down from the sky
For the guerdon of beauty with Venus to vie,
Like maids in their teens, though the years of the three
Were many, ere Tenedos rose from the sea—
So dazzled was Paris, he scarce could declare,
Which Deity bloomed most bewitchingly fair ;
But a different judgment that day there had been,
If MAGA, the peerless, had stepped on the green !

Then long may she flourish in beauty and worth,
The loved of the muses, the pride of the North !
Long, long may she shine in her bountiful light,
Like the ruddy Aurora that kindles the night !
And when she has doubled the span of her age,
With the vigour of youth ever stamped on her page,
May some minstrel in rapture and triumph declare,
That none can with MAGA, ONE THOUSAND, compare !

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TALES FROM "BLACKWOOD."

GRACE OWEN'S ENGAGEMENT.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON.

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CHAPTER I.

June 3, 184–.—So here I am, fairly launched on the voyage to fame, fortune, and happiness. It certainly looks like it, considering what means and appliances I have for the journey. A table and two chairs, so that I shall not have to take my breakfast on the floor, and that is an advantage at all events; a bed—at least such a thing as they call a bed in the Fatherland; a chest of drawers, some of which will really half open if you pull hard enough, and will very nearly shut again; a portmanteau, containing a reasonable quantity of clothes; a pipe; a box of cigars; an easel; and twenty-five pounds

a-quarter of lawful English money. And yet I am better off than I ever was in my life before; and, above all, Grace loves me. Should I not be the most selfish, the most contemptible of men, if I do not work hard with her happiness in view? Yes; to-morrow I will begin to work with the energy of a Hercules. Meanwhile I will descend from my attic and go and smoke a cigar on the Terrace.

June 6.—Two days in my new quarters. Tibald received me well and kindly, and seemed pleased to welcome an Englishman to his *atelier*. I like the man so far—there is largeness about him, and good-heartedness too, though his manner is dry and rough enough. As to his advice, why of course it is obviously sound; but then I am no German, and can't work eighteen hours a-day. Besides, he wants me to set to work as if every year had thirty-six months, as if it were Art that is short and life that is long; and I have to crowd so much into two years. I see I must guide myself a little, and be more than a little hard-mouthed, else I shall never get beyond a foot-pace, and that certainly would not suit me; nor, I think, Grace either.

June 15.—Ought I not to be completely happy? The accepted lover of Grace Owen, freed from the old days of want, engaged in the pursuit I choose, and would always choose, above all others, under the direction of its greatest living master, and surrounded by its greatest existing works, ought I not

to revel in joy? But, how can I altogether help fearing? Two whole years away from her, and no means of hearing from her meanwhile or of letting her hear from me. I trust her, God knows; but still, what might not happen in two whole years? Oh, Grace, forgive me if my joy in your love is sometimes almost too great for me to bear.

June 27.—The voyage goes well on the whole, though of course diversified by many clouds and shadows of discouragement. Tibald and I are friendly, but I can't help fancying that he somehow looks rather down on my quickness and facility, and is always telling me what *not* to do. Besides, I have found out a great weakness in the master. He dogmatises, and either won't or can't argue. If I had twenty years before me, instead of not quite two, well and good; but to wait twenty years for Grace!

June 29.—So I have really seen it at last, the great Sistine Madonna, in the flesh. Is not that something to rejoice over? But yet—Bah! I never pretended to enthusiasm when I did not feel it. Feel it to-day I certainly did not. There was, however, that 'La Notte of Coreggio. I would have given—well, I would give up anything but Grace to have painted that; but I was certainly disappointed with the San Sisto. Nevertheless I must copy it, I suppose. Am I not an artist and at Dresden?

July 4.—I have thought a great deal about Grace to-day. Is there anything in sympathy, I wonder, and dare I think she has been thinking of me also? Yes, I dare. I trust her with my whole soul, and I would trust her to wait a hundred years, if need were. What have I not won in winning her! Beauty, goodness, and all the love of a good and bright and beautiful girl. When I think of her I needs must think well of myself, otherwise I should pay her an ill compliment. But yet I cannot help feeling that I do not deserve her. What am I that I should have obtained her love?

But at least I can try not to be unworthy of my great happiness. I will be as true to her in thought and deed as she, I know, will be to me. I will become great for her sake. I have always loved Art, but hitherto without ambition. Now I have ambition, and of the highest kind—ambition for her sake, and for Art's sake through hers.

July 5. — The *maëstro* was in a good humour to-day. He actually paid me a compliment. I appreciated it, for he seldom compliments. But what did he mean by that shrug of the shoulders? Bah! What do I care for his compliments, or his shrugs either? I know myself pretty well by this time, I suppose.

July 7.—I wonder what she is doing at this moment. How shall I fancy her? — among her flowers perhaps; or, perhaps—but what does it

matter? Any way, she is beautiful; any way, she is doing that which best becomes her.

> "Each your doing
> Crowns what you are doing in the present deed,
> That all your acts are queens."

July 9.—I could scarcely attend to the music this evening; but I suppose it was good, as it filled my mind with thoughts of Grace. If I could but write to her and tell her how she is ever in my mind, how her image is always before me in work, in amusement, even in sleep itself! And yet the world will say that I marry for money. Well, let it say so. We shall be able to laugh at the world. I wonder, though, what her father really thinks about it. As a merchant, and one who has always looked well after the main chance, I should have fancied that he would have doubted me, were it not for his thinking me not unworthy to be the husband of his only child. That is strange; there I wonder with the world. Yet why should not a merchant be unworldly among his own household, and as clear-sighted in matters of the heart as in those of the market? Surely these qualities are not the monopolies of artists; certainly not of the artists whom I know.

Any way, she at least knows that I love her; she at least will never doubt me, for she never will have cause.

July 9.—I am getting on with the San Sisto.

But I do not *feel* it, and dislike my work. After all, I only try at it, I believe, because it is the fashion. The *maëstro* himself called it stupid of me, and said I had better stick to form, and so on —and so I will. But, meanwhile, I have an idea— I will do something of my own—I will paint a picture. Meanwhile, I will smoke a cigar on the Terrace.

July 12.—Dear Grace! I wonder after all whether you think of me as much as I of you. I would try and paint your portrait if I dared, but I am not quite conceited enough for that. But I can paint it in my mind. What an age it seems since I said good-bye to you in London, since I held that little white hand, and looked into those pure grey eyes! Ah! you need not be afraid; I shall never see any eyes like yours, nor hear any voice half so sweet. No, my own Grace, if work must win you, here goes!

July 30.— I really think that the *maëstro* is beginning to be pleased with me. He certainly seemed to be doubtful about me at one time. Emil says (what a chattering animal it is!) that he never does like men who are above their alphabet. Well, I agree with him, and I candidly think he was right in my case. However, I have done my share of work this week; certainly more than any of these slow Germans. So I will reward myself with a cigar or two on the Terrace.

August 2.—A letter at the Post Office for Herr Edward Maurice !—a wonder ! and from her father.

So ; I am in my own room again. I will read it before the picture that I am painting for her sake.

"RUSSELL SQUARE, LONDON,
July 29, 184-.

"MY DEAR EDWARD,—I was very glad to learn from your letter that you are settled down and at work. I was at Dresden myself a great many years ago ; in fact, it formed part of the tour I took with my poor wife ; and I remember the place well.

"I trust you found no difficulty in duly receiving the money. You will apply for all future remittances to Messrs Rinck, the bankers, in the Grün Gasse.

"Grace is very well.

"I hope that you will keep to work, and return home a great painter. Meanwhile, believe me, my dear Edward, yours most sincerely,

"RICHARD OWEN."

The devil ! Is that all ?

One thing, however, is clear—he does not intend me to continue the correspondence.

August 11.—My picture is getting on. I never painted so well in England. The place seems congenial to me. Ah, Grace ! we may not have to wait so very long, after all.

August 20.—It was this day two years ago that I first saw her. How well I remember being introduced by Lawson, and how absurdly and unreasonably jealous I became of the poor fellow afterwards. By the way, I ought to write to him. Well, I have nothing else to do just now, so—

"25 Marien Strasse, Alt-Markt, Dresden.

"Dear Frank,—You must have thought I was dead; but far from it. I am as alive as possible. It is you who are dead, you in the Eternal City! Dresden is pleasant in its way, though dull; not that I care about either quality, who am here to work and not to play. I have to live stingily also; but then the little I have now is wealth to the nothing I had in London. After all, my dear fellow, though I grumbled at the time, old Owen was right; and not only right, but kind into the bargain. God knows I long for the time when I shall be what you call lost for ever; but it will certainly be best for all parties for me not to enter a rich family quite a beggar. You and I are too great friends for me not to tell you all. I wish you had been in town when matters were arranged, for I detest letter-writing, even to you—perhaps to you more than to any one, for you never answer. Well, then, I am to marry Grace Owen in two years' time. What am I to do meanwhile? you ask. This is the very mystery of my being in

Dresden. You must have stared at the date of my letter, but this is why. It is explained in two words. I am to study here under Tibald himself, at the expense of Grace's father. No making me enter his counting-house; no making me give up Art; but telling me to make the best of the gifts God gave me; and, when I have done so, to take his daughter's hand freely, rich or poor. Ought I not to work after that?

"How goes luck with you in Rome, and how with Harris, and Vere, and Roche? Tell me soon. I have a good set here; but even now I sometimes think with a sigh of the beer and negrohead of Newman Street.

"You return soon to England, do you not? I suppose you will be calling in Russell Square. Please send me news of Grace, for I have promised not to write to her. I shall envy you. Do you know I was jealous of you once?

"I have begun to paint a picture—subject, the death of Moreau, which, you possibly don't know, is locally historical, so I can do the topography business from nature. There is a charming point here on the road to Pillnitz, whence I have directed the smoke of five hundred cigars straight across the battle-field. I go and sit there constantly in the evening with my note-book, and think and sketch and smoke and dream in the most delightful manner possible, to the accompaniment of the rust-

ling of the leaves, the song of the birds, and—the rumbling of the skittle-alleys. For wherever there is a pleasant spot near the town, there you will find skittles and beer. I begin to like it, however. There is something rather fascinating about the national mingling of romance and grossness, the sentimental and the grotesque. You find it in all the ways of the people, in their character, in their ideas, in all their literature of every kind, everywhere, in short, except perhaps in their music, and it is sometimes even there.

"What are you doing? I wish you were here. Come, and see how we paint in Germany, and especially how paints your friend,

"EDWARD MAURICE."

August 25.—Another of my anniversaries — the day when she first visited my studio. Miserable rubbish she saw there! I know I was half ashamed, and how I afterwards loved the little sketch she praised, and now keeps for my sake! How I long to hear from her—but that cannot be. Work—that is now the best thing I can do both for her and for myself. I almost think I make progress; I am certain that I must, for how could I help it with such a motive?

I think it rather a good sign that the *maëstro* is always blaming me, and finding faults in my work. I used to dislike it at first, but I now understand

him better, and see that he takes an interest in me after all. I wish I could find out what he really thinks, though—and I should like a little praise sometimes. The highest that I get seems to consist of a long-drawn "*So!*" or, if he is in an excessively good humour, a sound something like "Hm! Hm!" spoken distinctly through the nose.

Well, what shall I have to show her when she enters my studio the next time? Rubbish again, or—something great? Who knows?

I still have a good hour of daylight left; I will make it another hour of Moreau.

August 29. — One of those glorious summer days, when we seem to waste life by giving it to Art, and when eternal and supreme nature asserts her sovereignty. I thought of summer days just as glorious—I confess that I grew sentimental—all past and gone, and the sweet scent with which the air was filled made me long to throw myself upon the grass and weep, if need were, from very excess of sunshine and beauty. If she were only here, what glorious days we could spend together! As it was, everything and everybody seemed glad but myself, who found pleasure impossible, and work utterly against the grain. I must get rid of these childish feelings. One's will ought to be superior to weather, be the latter good or bad. To-day I fought successfully indeed, but the fight was very hard, and left me very weary. However, I had my

reward. My evening walk, though solitary, was thus all the more delightful, and the contrast of the quiet, soft air which soothed with the brightness which had disturbed, restored me to the happiness which now ought never to be invaded. I walked along the river; and the hills, and woods, and water, for once, were more than beautiful. I did not think as I walked—I only lived; I felt for once as if I were one with nature—the leader of a great chorus of sky and earth, of wood and river, of hill and plain; and what was it that the chorus sang?

Ah, Grace! what but you could be the soul of that song?

CHAPTER II.

"DRESDEN, *4th September.*

"DEAR FRANK,—This neighbourhood grows on me. It certainly is not great, nor is there much variety—the river, the hills, the woods, the vineyards—that is about all. Before I return I must make a run into Saxon Switzerland and fill my sketch-book, which is as yet rather empty. But one can't do everything. Meanwhile, I am rather glad that there is nothing to seduce me into dreaming among good scenery away from the study of lines and muscles. If there were, I feel I should be lost. I felt to-day an unutterable disgust for the studio, the gallery, and all the whole machinery for

turning out an artist in the approved style. I had a real longing for open nature, and, shaking myself free of men and statues, to revel in the sun without thinking of anything, and so—I went to my beer-garden! Why, I must be more than half Teutonised already.

"However, I had not been long at my favourite spot, and had not sent many discharges of smoke towards the death-ground of the Marshal, when I was amused by a little adventure that has left a pleasant impression upon me, God knows why, for it was slight enough. To begin with, the *eilwagen* was creeping along the Leipzig road, between myself and the river. I felt my usual temptation to see if I could not throw a stone on to the top of it, but I have become so skilful of late that I was really afraid of succeeding, so I restrained myself. But what's that? The *eilwagen* overturned? Impossible!—yes, but true, nevertheless. So I went down the hill to inquire into such an extraordinary circumstance.

"The wheel had come off. When I arrived, there was the driver holding the horses (neither of which was the least inclined to move), and gazing on the wreck in despair. The *eilwagen* had fallen to pieces, and the passengers were scattered about. Such passengers! Where could they have come from? They were not hurt by the catastrophe, and so I could afford to stare. Yet I don't know

why I should have stared either, only they looked so miserable and so extremely dusty. First, there was an old man, little, lean, as brown almost as a coffee-berry, with long hair and grey moustache—for the rest, close shorn, but stubbly—very seedy as to costume, and with a half-smoked cigar still in his mouth; he had not parted with that, even in the moment of calamity. Secondly, a woman who might be old or might be young, very ugly, very fat, nearly as brown as the man, quite as shabby, but smiling placidly. Lastly, a young woman with a family likeness to the other two, and therefore, as you may suppose, not beautiful, and not dressed after the fashion-books. When I approached, the man stooped, picked up his hat, put it on his head, and then took it off again with a sweeping bow, and stepped forward easily and quite composed.

"I hastily asked in German what was the matter, and if any one was hurt.

"The man gave a piteous shrug of his whole person—not the least like the celebrated shrug of Tibald, which is made with the tips of the shoulders only—and said in some strange language which I suppose he thought was French—

"'*Ah, Mosiou, que sche suis désolé!—mi capis' minga la vostra lingua, per Bacco!*'

"At least it sounded something like this, so I repeated my question in French, but this would not

do either, and my Italian being altogether drawn from the *libretti* of operas, I ransacked my brain in vain for a phrase applicable to the upset of an *eil-wagen*. Very soon, however, the younger woman came forward, and in good French, but with a bad accent, told me what had happened. They were coming from Leipzig—(considering their road and their direction, I could have told them that myself)—all their luggage was with them—which I suppose meant that they had no luggage anywhere at all, for I could see none—and they were going to Dresden, which was equally evident. But what were they to do? The driver had to see after the horses and carriage, or rather the remnants, and they did not know their way. 'Now for the adventure!' you will exclaim. Well, I told them! and that is all.

"Imagine the laziness that makes me sit down and write a letter like this. The fact is, I have, for once, taken a whole holiday, and have enjoyed it very much indeed. Also I wanted to write to you; but resolved not to tell you anything until I heard from you. Why don't you write—*per Bacco?*—Yours eternally, E. Maurice."

September 6.—Moreau is advancing, but slowly. Legitimate work faster, though the *maëstro* is as taciturn as ever. Life, though, is very pleasant. I am certainly lucky in the people I find here, and

there is at the same time no fear of my having too much society, even if I wished it. Only I wish I could get news of Grace. How much of two years is gone?

I wonder who that is singing in the other attic? A wonderfully sweet voice, and not badly taught—altogether not such as one would expect to find up half-a-hundred flights. I hope she won't use it too often, though; it will play the devil with Moreau.

It would drive me wild if I had Grisi herself for a neighbour. Good or bad, singing or speaking, there is something in hearing the sound of a woman's voice when one is at work that drives one wild with nervous irritation—one voice of course excepted.

It is certainly time Lawson wrote; he must have been in England some weeks now.

September 9.—A letter from Lawson!

"Dear Maurice,—Both your letters arrived at Rome after I left, consequently I have only just got them, and hence the delay in my answer.

"I left Rome to escape the latter summer, but instead of going to Florence, as I intended, came back here at once. Circumstances, and so on. Where do you think I write this? At the old place in Newman Street! I am lonely enough just now, though—all the world is out of town except myself—including the Owens. I asked after them yester-

day, and was told they are at Scarborough, so I cannot send you any news now. Rely on me, however, in October.

"My dear fellow, I am duller than Thames water, or even than father Tiber, who is just now duller still. You ask after friends. Well, I left all in good spirits, the more so as none had any money. I don't think we had eight shillings among us all. But did you ever observe the remarkable phenomenon that as our friends' purses go down their spirits go up? So just before I went we spent the eight shillings in drinking to each other's speedy prosperity — not to yours, old fellow — your Bohemian days are over, so we drank your memory in solemn silence."

"Depend upon me for sending you all the news I hear. I shall be sure to see the Owens before long, and will make a point of letting Mademoiselle know whatever I hear from you. There are more ways of killing a dog than hanging him.—Yours ever, F. L."

September 11.—Confound that young woman who sings! Who can she be, I wonder? Some chorus singer at the theatre, perhaps—her airs seem all to have an operatic tendency. I expect she knows the feel of the boards, and I guess her to be Italian. She doesn't sing like a German. She might be English, from her voice, but that isn't likely. One

doesn't find English girls with charming voices singing to the four walls of a Dresden attic—nor Italian either, for that matter. But one or the other she must be, I wager anything.

Scales! now then, I *am* in for it! No more work for me at present. So I'll just see what her notion of a scale is, and then I'll take a turn on the Terrace.

Bravissima! Why, who the devil can she be? This grows interesting. But has she no piano? Well, thank God, I am spared that, at all events.

September 15.—I wonder what the result of these two years with Tibald will be. I have learned something, certainly, but now seem at a standstill. I really want a little encouragement. What an ass I was not to have stipulated for at least one letter during the time! For aught I know—no, no! I have nothing to do with fear or doubt.

But certainly Lawson ought to have written again. I will stir him up.

"Dear Frank,—I write for news. Having none of my own to give in exchange, I send you a continuation of the *eilwagen* adventure, without reference to the probability of your having forgotten it. If you have not, perhaps you will not have forgotten my account of the passengers who were spilled on that memorable occasion. Well, they have turned up again, and very oddly. The other day, on the

stairs, I met the little old man, still with half a cigar in his mouth, and still stubbly as to the cheeks. His razors must be unmatchable for bluntness. We exchanged good-mornings, and I discovered that we are fellow-inhabitants of No. 25—in fact, we live in adjoining attics. We recognised each other at once. This leads to another discovery. From that attic comes forth the most delicious voice conceivable; a full soprano, singing scales and elaborate exercises in the real Italian style. Is not this like the beginning of a romance? For I assume that it is not the old woman who sings.

"The man seems intelligent, and even clever, so far as I can make out; but my ignorance of Italian, and his of any tongue but his own, is rather in the way of an interchange of ideas. I wonder how he gets his living. I am rather disposed to think he doesn't get it at all. He is not very communicative, and I can't get him to ask me to his apartment. I fancy he is terribly poor—he had no apparent linen when I first saw him, and now he seems to have less, if that is possible—and I fancy thinks me a sort of *millionaire*. Well, I suppose I am, compared with him. I think I will ask him to my own attic, so that he may see that he has no particular reason to be afraid of a comparison of furniture. There are many mysteries about him I should much like to unravel. First, of course, what brings him to Dresden; secondly, how it is that he always

appears to have shaved the day before yesterday; thirdly, who is the singer; fourthly, how they get their living; fifthly—and above all—how it is that his cigar is always exactly half smoked through. There are others too, but these will be enough for the present.

"What has become of the Owens? Have you seen anything of them yet? Let me know all you hear.

"For myself, I am really doing something, both with Tibald and my own private work. 'The Death of Moreau' is drawing to an end.

"Remember me to all friends and acquaintances, especially to Roche, if he is in England. How does he get on? and, above all, how do you?

"E. M."

"*September* 26.

"Dear Maurice,—Your letters are even emptier than mine, but I will beat you in emptiness this time. I have only just seen the Owens. Observe the plural number, for the father has been in town some days attending to the multiplication table, and other commercial mysteries. But the young lady has been staying with two aunts in Lincolnshire—quite in the wilds of the fens—where nobody is ever heard of. I saw her, however, yesterday afternoon. She was extremely well, and looking it. I gave her bits of your letters, and she was

extremely pleased. Health and pleasure naturally made her extremely amiable, but that she always is. But I need not sing her praises to you ; besides, perhaps, I shall revive your jealousy. You have no reason to be afraid of her flirting—of that I feel sure. She didn't send you any message—that is, not in words, for in looks she sent a hundred. Really she is very charming, and if you must give up Bohemia for a pair of bright eyes, why you might have done worse than you have.

"I suppose you don't want to hear about anything else? You do? Well then, I am going to leave England—yes, even Newman Street. Upon my soul I can't stand it, to live here with neither money, prospects, nor friends,—so I am back to Italy, there, if I may, to live, and die, and be buried. I would ask you to come too, but of course that would be hopeless now, so direct to me for the future at the old address at Rome. I start to-morrow.—*Roma o morte!*

"Roche is well, and has even got some few half-crowns, so he has an idle fit on him. Everybody else is helping him to pass it as pleasantly as may be. For me I am sick of things in general, and if I were only a little less disgusted, I would really try to get some half-crowns myself—shillings, perhaps, would be more in my line. Such is the condition, my dear fellow, of your friend,

"Frank Lawson."

"*P.S.*—What a wonderful fellow you are for weaving romances out of nothing! Your mystery is as clear as daylight. Is there no opera in Dresden? And does it not require chorus-singers? A pint of stout to a dozen of champagne—done!

"*P.P.S.*—As to the nightingale, I have no doubt that invisibility lends enchantment to the sound."

CHAPTER III.

DRESDEN, *October* 31.

"DEAR FRANK,—Thanks, old fellow, for your letter and your news. I am sorry, though, you are going into exile. Shan't I find you when I come back? I suppose you don't mean to cut us all for ever.

"I can scarcely say you're wrong either. But, selfishly, I am really very much disgusted. So let me hear soon that you intend to change your mind in a year-and-a-half's time. You speak of money—can I help you at all? I can do so to the extent of a few pounds now, and I suppose when I am settled I shall be good for one or two more. You know there ought to be no humbug of false delicacy between you and me. The only thing I won't do for you is the only thing you ask me to do—that is, to come to Rome.

"I am working really hard, and hope to be able to do something in time according to better lights.

But beyond barren accounts of work I have nothing particular to say. For amusement, I am not badly off for society, and I manage to hear a good deal of music, which here is not very ruinous work, and is very good on the whole. The opera is over for the present, but it has been a very fair season, although without any very tremendous stars. Still we had ——, and ——, and our old Paris friend, and we are in the land of orchestras, unless, perhaps, Vienna beats us, which we never allow.

"Of excursions I have made none, though Dresden is the headquarters of tourists for the Saxon Schweiz. We have had lots of them—tourists, I mean; but no one that I knew anything about, except some people that you are fortunate enough not to know, and whom I always avoid as much as I can.

"About your bet, you are partly right and partly wrong, so I will not take it. I will tell you the whole story of how I found out all about the Italians, though you do laugh at my tendency to romance. Well, curiosity got the better of me one idle evening after dusk, and, inventing an excuse, I went across the passage and tapped at the door. A woman's voice called out '*Herein!*' and I opened. It was too dark for me to see who was in the room, but, seeing that it was not empty, I asked in French—

"'Is Signor Salvi at home?'

"An old woman who had been sleeping, I fancy,

in a chair, roused herself, but did not speak. It was the girl who answered,—

"'Signor Salvi is not at home, Monsieur.' The voice was very clear, and soft, and sweet, I assure you, without romance. 'Have you business with him?'

"'I have the honour of speaking with his daughter, have I not, Mademoiselle?'

"'To the niece of Signor Salvi, Monsieur.'

"'I am your neighbour on this floor. My name is Maurice. I took the liberty of disturbing you to——' The pretence for calling which I had intended to make use of was that of asking for a light; but the room was so cold and so dark—excepting for the moonlight which shone through the window—that it was not difficult to see that my neighbours were unable to procure a light for themselves. I hesitated, and stood at the door—rather like a fool, I fear. The girl came forward into the moonlight; but as her back was to the window I could not see her face.

"'You are quite welcome, Monsieur,' she said; 'I would ask you to sit down and wait, but'—and she hesitated in her turn—'but my uncle is not in yet, and I am doubtful when he will be.' She spoke rather anxiously, and looked at the window for an instant. 'If, however,' she added, 'Monsieur would be good enough to leave any message with me——'

"'A thousand thanks, Mademoiselle; but it is of no consequence. Another time will do just as well.'

"I was uncertain how to proceed. Suddenly a brilliant thought struck me. 'With your permission I will call again presently,' I said. 'Good evening, Madame—good evening, Mademoiselle.' And I left the room without giving either time to reply.

"On re-entering my own room I left the door open in order that I might hear when Salvi himself returned. It was not long before my ears caught the sound of a step on the stair, then the opening of the door opposite to mine, and then, for an instant, the sound of voices before it was closed again. I then waited a quarter of an hour by my watch, filled my cigar-case, took up a light, and again tapped at my neighbour's door.

"This time it was a man's voice that answered '*Herein!*'

"'Pardon me, Mademoiselle,' I said, affecting for the moment not to see her uncle, 'I think I should like to leave a message.' I then turned towards Salvi. 'A thousand pardons, Monsieur, I did not see that you had returned. I wished to speak to you just now, but found you gone out.

"You are most welcome, Monsieur. Pray, be seated.' The old fellow spoke as if he was welcoming me to a palace. I looked at him—noticed the

eternal half cigar—and took a seat, placing my light on the table. Salvi sat opposite, and regarded me gravely from his grey eyes.

"This time I had my pretext ready. 'Knowing that you are an Italian,' I said, 'though not from what part of Italy, I want to ask you if you could kindly give me any information about Florence as a residence. Some friends of mine are thinking of settling there.'

"This may appear a stupid pretext at first sight, but it was carefully calculated to serve two great purposes at once. One was that I might learn from what part of Italy my host came, and the other that he might be embarked in a long discourse, which would probably contain something about himself and his family, and would certainly give me time and opportunity to make farther observations.

"'I come from Milan, Monsieur: but I know Florence well, and will tell you what I know with pleasure. Does Monsieur understand Italian?'

"'Not twenty words.'

"'Then I must continue to speak French. But will not Monsieur smoke?' He put out his hand to the remainder of an old jar, but I stopped him.

"'Thank you; but I should very much like you to try one of mine. I do not think they are very bad, but I should like a second opinion.

"The Italian took the cigar I offered at once, and was soon embarked in a long story.

"I now proceeded to examine the singer, who was seated at some needlework, and was greatly disappointed in her. I had pictured to myself a face beautiful enough to match the beautiful voice, but only saw features which were, though not ugly, certainly plain. The face was rather square shaped, though not harshly or hardly, the shape being carried out still more by the marked form of the chin, and the way in which the very dark—almost black—hair was pushed away from the rather low forehead and temples, and fell in heavy, coarse, thick, and neglected waves behind her little white ears, and down her neck. Her mouth was large in proportion to her face—the nose being small—but it was well shaped, and the flexible lips, of which the upper was just shaded by a suspicion of down, and the lower was rather too full, appeared capable of great variety of expression, that which seemed most natural to them being, though firm, very sweet and attractive. Her complexion was, I should judge, one of those very sallow ones which look well only by candle-light, so that I probably saw her at her best—it was quite devoid of any colour, and rather thick, and her cheeks were not well rounded. She had, however, one magnificent point—large, soft, living eyes of the colour of genius—the glorious golden hazel, rarer than genius itself. Their expression was not easy to read, but they had passion and brains in them; they indicated that combina-

tion of qualities which makes men great and women miserable. In figure she was just under the middle height, fully formed, not slight and not slender, but rather stately, with good hands and feet, though not, perhaps, of the smallest. She was dressed very poorly, and even meagrely, in some stuff that was changing from black to brown, and she wore no ornament except a rosary of the commonest sort. Whatever others she might ever have possessed, had probably been long ago sold for necessaries. Such was the heroine of the mystery.

"The old woman—her aunt, apparently—seemed to be a nobody. She was very fat, very ugly, very dirty, but also very placid. Her smile alone ought to save her from starvation. But the mobile expression of the niece was far removed, even when in repose, from placid calm, and now was filled with a joyful brightness which, when she regarded her uncle, softened into affectionate satisfaction.

"They were very poor, that was evident, and it was as evident that they were used to poverty; but still the uncle, and still more the niece—it was unnecessary and useless to speculate about the placid aunt—showed signs of culture and refinement. At the close of the long speech which old Salvi had made about Florence,—of which, I must confess, I had not heard very much,—I said—

"'I am very much obliged to you, and have been

very much interested. May I ask if you have been long in Germany?'

"'Only a few months. My brother—Antonia's father—had an engagement at the opera at Leipzig—he was a violinist, like myself'—he drew himself up in his seat—'and he got me engaged there to fill a vacancy. I was disengaged at the time, and came; but, ah, Monsieur, we are all mortal!'—here he puffed vigorously at the cigar—'and my poor Carlo had only time to bless his daughter—and Monsieur knows the ways of theatres'—he gave a prodigious shrug—'and *eccomi quà!*' He tried to smile, but failed miserably.

"I just glanced at Antonia. Her eyes and hands were unnaturally busy with her work. I looked at Madame Salvi. She was grave, but placid still.

"'And so, Monsieur, I thought I could not do better than come here. Perhaps I may get an engagement for the opera season; anyhow, they say, I shall have a better chance than at Leipzig. But you see'—he began to speak quickly and energetically—'meanwhile one must live. So I have spent my money—I have wandered about—I have sought engagements—and to-day, Monsieur, I have found one.'

"'And I hope a good one.'

"'It is as second violin at the theatre. It is a poor thing, Monsieur, for a man who has talent; but, after all, one must live'—(a lamentable shrug).

"'And therefore I congratulate you, and the more so as I have been in heavy straits myself. Besides, no doubt you will rise if you remain here.'

"'Ah, Monsieur flatters! But who shall live, shall see.'

"'And hear also, I hope. But Mademoiselle your niece—is she not also an artist?'

"'Antonia will be a great artist. But you see her education is broken. If all had gone well at Leipzig——'

"'But surely your own instructions——'

"'Such as she is, Monsieur, my own and my poor Carlo's have made her. But she wants practice—she wants form.'

"'Could you not get her an engagement here?'

"'Impossible. There is nothing going on at present; and we have no name, no money, no introductions, no friends. Ah, Monsieur does *not* know the ways of theatres.'

"'Well, I shall live in the hope of applauding both of you before long. For the present, good night, and a thousand thanks. I hope this will not be the end of our acquaintance, and that we shall be good neighbours — especially as we are both artists.'

"'Ah! Is Monsieur then also of the theatre?' Salvi's eyes sparkled, as if he saw an opening.

"'No; I am a painter.'

"This time Antonia looked up with interest.

"'Pardon, Monsieur,' answered the uncle. 'I too hope that we shall be good neighbours.'

"After a few expressions of courtesy on both sides, I left them.

"Now, as you know, I am pretty well acquainted with Bohemia in all its tracts, and the old violinist is no new character to me. I understand him thoroughly. It is the old story—the man being forced by circumstances rather than talent into that artist-life which, when it once lays hold of a man, never lets him go. Have you not seen, a hundred times over, that type of man, without anything like common sense or common prudence, running wildly on account of some vague promise, and without means, say from Milan to Dresden, and then disgusted if he is lucky enough to find himself able to keep body and soul together? May I not even add that we too know something of such things from our own experience of ourselves? I have weathered the storm now, and am entitled to preach.

"And so, my dear Frank, I have not sent you this long story without a moral. I will not set it out in full, but it comes to this—return to England, and share, so far as may be, the fortunes of your friend, EDWARD MAURICE."

CHAPTER IV.

Edward Maurice was perfectly right in his estimate of the violinist. Salvi was a hanger-on of Art —a man of sufficient technical skill to be able to make a sorry living by it, but without a particle of genius, and—what was worse—without the self-knowledge which alone could have improved, or even have made him accept, his position. His brother had been a man of a higher order; though also without genius, he had appreciated himself more justly, and had cultivated himself better as a musician. Though not a great artist himself, he knew what was requisite for the formation of a great artist, and had believed with truth that he had found all the material upon which to work in his only child, Antonia. From his earnings, which were never large, he had spent freely upon her musical education whatever he could possibly spare, and the one dream of his toiling life had been to give her a sound and thorough training, and to bring her out upon the lyric stage. Antonia had entered heart and soul into all her father's plans. She had acquired from the influence of all the circumstances which had surrounded her from her earliest years an intense passion for musical art, and especially for that branch of it which belongs to the drama. But from nature she had acquired much more than

this. She had that mysterious, that divine faculty which certainly exists in some independently of circumstance, of culture, even of intellect itself, and which, for want of a better and more exact knowledge, we vaguely and insufficiently call genius. But genius itself requires culture to produce Art. The most expressive voice that ever sang, the most perfect musical instinct, the most divinely inspired soul, must still be taught and trained; and the finer and subtler the material, the more skilful must be the hand, and the more elaborate the process, that is required to weave it into form. Antonia Salvi was, at an early age, a formed woman physically and mentally—for she was of southern race, and artistic genius is ever precocious—of magnificent capabilities, of intense impulses, of grand natural gifts; but she required that culture which can only be gained in the beaten track—the technicalities, the restraints, the traditions, and the useful, if not altogether necessary, conventionalities of art. The utter want of worldly tact and knowledge in herself and in her present protectors, made it likely that, unless some most unlooked-for piece of good fortune should befall her, she would be doomed to waste her great talents upon some obscure stage, or in endeavouring to teach the rudiments of an art with which she herself was imperfectly acquainted. At present the chorus of the Dresden theatre seemed to be her inevitable destiny.

Her want of personal beauty was also against her in a professional point of view; and the sensitive shyness which is so often a quality of the finer order of minds, both among men and women, was likely to prevent her for a long period from gaining the ease of manner that more than supplies personal defects. She herself was conscious of her want—what plain woman is not?—but she was not wise enough to endeavour to rectify it by any acquired attraction of manner. On the contrary, she, in her sensitive pride, concealed not only her great powers, but even her vast hoards of affection and sympathy, from the world at large, and revealed them only to her own immediate circle, which was narrow indeed.

At Dresden she had no means whatever of self-cultivation—not even access to a musical instrument—and almost all her time was taken up in attending to the domestic affairs of the little household. These affairs were small and trivial, it is true, but Antonia, though a woman, was an exceedingly bad manager, and the worst possible of economists; worse, even, than her uncle himself, if that might be. She was always in some difficulty or making some blunder, and her very imperfect knowledge of German did not make her troubles less. The number of tears that she shed in the course of a week over *silbergroschen* that would never come right, would have sufficed for a dozen

funerals. Her uncle was always out of doors—not that that made any difference—and her aunt was quite incapable of doing anything but eating, drinking, smiling placidly, and going to sleep.

It may well be supposed that this manner of life was not likely to render poor Antonia more attractive in appearance or in manner than before. She grew worse dressed and more careless about herself—she had never been very conspicuous for neatness, or for the time or trouble that she spent upon her dress or person—sallower, thinner in the face, darker under the eyes, and less upright of carriage. She also grew more nervous and irritable, though she never showed this to her uncle or aunt, and more shy and silent than ever. But nothing injured the beauty of her voice or of her eyes.

Her voice was singularly clear and strong, with the soft and mellow fulness that never belongs to the true soprano, and the peculiar kind of sweetness with which the women of Italy and of Britain alone seem favoured. Though not of the true soprano, it was quite removed from the contralto quality, and would have been popularly classed as of the former. Maurice was, however, not quite right when, in one of his letters to Lawson, he spoke of her perfect style. She sang in perfect tune, certainly, but her school was full of faults, such as would have offended the least fastidious of critics.

Often, however, she would, by what seemed a happy chance, light upon some new rendering of a phrase, or some new effect which showed that her worst faults arose from anything but want of feeling or intelligence.

The English artist could not but be interested in her, and his interest could not but grow in proportion to the growth of their acquaintance. Otherwise, however, and independently of her voice, she had no attraction for him whatever, but rather the contrary. The lover of the beautiful, the graceful, and the amiable Grace Owen, about whom everything was always in perfect taste and in perfect keeping, was the last man who was likely to feel the least attraction towards the plain, ungraceful, and ungracious Italian, whom poverty and the hard circumstances in which she had spent her life had rendered,—not, indeed, ill-bred,—nature had taken care of that,—but as far removed from the idea of a *dame des salons* as could well be. All the refining influences of life had always surrounded Grace Owen: very few, always excepting those of Art, had touched the imperfect life of Antonia Salvi. And as to eyes, Edward Maurice had spoken the exact truth when he said that none, however beautiful, could surpass the sweet, pure eyes of the fair girl in England who was to be his wife—eyes in which he had read a hundred times all the truth and love of a true and loving heart.

The interest, however, such as it was, that he took in the position and character of Antonia, led him to repeat his visit to the apartment across the passage. The Italians were always glad to see him, as they had no friends, and scarcely any acquaintance; and a real liking sprang up among them. All, however, had their illusions about each other—that of Salvi himself being the idea that the charm of his own very mediocre performances on the violin was the attraction for the English painter; for, although vain to excess of his niece's talents, he was infinitely more vain of his own.

It was no very unusual thing, then, that one day in the following January Maurice tapped at Salvi's door, or that he heard the clear voice of Antonia cry "Come in!" or that he entered and found her alone. Her uncle was out, as usual, and her aunt was probably asleep in the next room. Antonia herself was engaged in her never-ending task of trying to make her *silbergroschen* come right.

"How busy you look, Antonia!" said Maurice. "You look like a Minister of Finance, at the least."

She shrugged herself together, something after the manner of her uncle. "I often wish I was a queen," she said, "but never so much as when I have my accounts to do."

"Why so?"

"Because then I should have a Finance Minister to save me the trouble."

"Perhaps the Queen that is to be—of Song—will appoint me to the office?"

"Look here!" she answered, wrinkling together her straight, black eyebrows, and pushing to him petulantly a small greasy account-book. "See what you can make of that."

It would have taxed the utmost skill of the most skilful accountant to make head or tail of the extraordinary specimen of compound addition and subtraction that was put into the hands of Maurice, who, not being even so much as an unskilful one, looked at it vaguely upside down. His look of bewilderment changed Antonia's mood in a moment, and she burst into a fit of laughter.

"I am afraid you will have to appoint me to some other office," said Maurice. "Finance was never very much in my line. But perhaps I can help you, nevertheless. Shall we try?"

Antonia really brightened at the suggestion, and for some minutes the two were deep in the mysteries of Saxon coinage. Certainly the disbursements were small, but enormous in proportion to the receipts. At last the discrepancy became so glaring, and there seemed so little hope of inventing any new system of management, that if Antonia had been alone she would have wept herself into a headache with despair; but, as she chanced to have a companion, her innate Bohemianism and her defiant spirit got the better of her, and she

worked herself into a reckless vein of talk and laughter.

It is as unnecessary as it would be impossible to produce any extracts from the little volume that formed at once the day-book and ledger of the family of the violinist. But, prosaic as were the contents, Maurice was really touched to the heart. Probably not ninety-nine persons out of a hundred really understand the intense distress that some men—of whom he was one—feel when they see great talents doomed to be checked and balked by undeserved poverty and the petty cares of conventional life. But the few who do understand it will readily comprehend the feelings of Edward Maurice towards Antonia. If she had been his greatest enemy, he would, with pleasure and eagerness, have spent more than he could well spare to place her in her true position. Whenever he heard her voice while he stood before his picture, he lamented her probable fate, and tried to form schemes whereby it might be reversed. But as yet he formed no resolution.

About this time he wrote the following letter to Lawson:—

"DRESDEN, *January* 15, 184-.

"DEAR FRANK,—When I last wrote to you, the leaves were still on the trees. What a long time back that makes it seem! Now, we are ice-bound, and do little else than skate. Which is most to be

envied of us two? You, on the whole, I think. But we have our pleasures too.

"I wish you could see my picture, as I want some one to give me a genuine opinion—some one who knows what I used to be, and could say whether I have improved or not. I cannot do very much to it just now, as the days are so short; but it is not very far from being finished, and will, I hope, be ready in a month or two.

"I never have any news from England now, except what I read in newspapers, and about that I don't much care. That is not news, in my sense, as you know. I sometimes think of taking a holiday and running over for a month; but the experiment would be too dangerous. After all, I have got over a quarter of my time, though it has seemed so long.

"What in the world shall I find to write about? You won't care to hear about skating, coffee-parties —which in dulness beat even the British tea-fight hollow—or any one whom I know, and of whom, excepting my *cantatrice* on the other side of the passage, you never heard. By the way, I wish I had not heard her quite so often myself. If you lived with me you would soon find out to your cost what makes me mention her in every letter I write. If the noise she makes in the world is ever anything like what she makes at No. 25 Marien Strasse, you will hear of her often enough in time. She is,

however, an amusing person to talk to, with more brains than beauty. She is very *naïve* and original too; and though her criticism is not exactly according to rule, it generally has meaning. How many of us could say as much?

"You see that I am writing more to ask you to write than to tell you anything. Sometimes I get a sort of home-sickness on me, and long to hear a voice from my old world. Work is not enough to fill one's whole life—especially mine, with whom it is so much more a means than an end. With some men, I know, it is different. Tibald himself, for instance, never seems to have an idea in his head, or a feeling in his heart, that has not reference to his work. If he were the most hopelessly stupid and unsuccessful man in the world, instead of being the contrary, I believe he would still work on in his own way, though the result were starvation. I sometimes feel quite angry with him. He is deaf to music, and apparently the most prosaic man in the world—never even talks about pictures except in the way that a carpenter talks about chairs and tables—all the energy and all the enthusiasm that he must have about him somewhere he bottles up and lets out from his finger-ends, never from his tongue or his eyes. He never needs rest or amusement. He seems an incarnation of Goethe's "Without haste—but without rest." Every hour of daylight he is at work—every hour that he is

awake he is thinking, in company with his meerschaum. He never dreams, not even in sleep. He tells me that he only had a dream once in his life, and what do you suppose it was? Some vague striving after ideal beauty?—some great attempt to express an unattainable thought? Not the least. He dreamed that Titian told him that he had better keep clear of heaven, for they got white beer there, and not Bavarian. Then he works so provokingly slowly. But what results! You know those works of his, so honestly emulating those of the giants of old, so grand, so full of poetry, and yet almost so over-faultless. He seems, too, as a teacher, to read the nature of one's talent by intuition, and knows how to bring it out; and he has a genius for criticism, though it is always of the cold and judicial order—he never seems to hate or to love. Sheer power and strength, without beauty—that is his character: he seems to put so much beauty into his work that he has left none to spare for life.

"I confess I do not understand such a man. I say, let life be beautiful as a whole. Art is not everything. What say you at Rome?—Yours ever,

"E. Maurice."

CHAPTER V.

However much or little Maurice thought about Antonia, she certainly thought a great deal about him. He was the first person she had ever known who was capable of giving her anything like sympathy in her vague aspirations—who could share her feeling about Art as something more than a means of obtaining one's share of the good things of this earth. When but a child, her questions and her dreams, which she then used to pour forth with impulsive frankness, had been as little understood by those about her as if she talked the language of another world—as, in fact, she did. With the quickness of all children in such matters, she soon found this out, and drew into herself more and more, and became strange and solitary. The wandering life her family led had always prevented her forming more than the most passing acquaintance with other girls of her own age, and those with whom she did meet interested her but little; and so she passed the unhappy youth which such natures must inevitably undergo — unhappy even when surrounded by affectionate sympathy, but unspeakably miserable when, as is usually the case, it is misunderstood. When such natures have grown old enough to appreciate the world and themselves, the bitterness passes away. True

genius accepts with a proud and silent resignation its solitary fate, and rejoices in shedding abroad its warmth and light without even wishing for the least return. But Antonia, as yet, understood neither herself nor the world. She still longed for sympathy, and to meet with some nature that might speak her own language and comprehend something of what filled her soul.

She was not an acute analyst of the characters of others—her experience was too confined, and her nature too introspective and self-contained. She always accepted others who showed her any kindness at an estimation higher even than that at which they valued themselves; and as Maurice was, in many points, really her superior—in experience and cultivation, for instance—she was only too willing to lean on and confide in him. She was woman, after all.

Maurice, on the contrary, was, consciously and intentionally, an analyser of men and things. Though of a lighter and less intense character than Antonia, his imagination, his experience of men and women, and that almost feminine sensibility which is a common phenomenon of the artistic temperament, led him to comprehend Antonia's character very soon. He could not, perhaps, feel quite like her, but he could understand her feelings much better than she could understand them herself.

It gradually became more and more the habit of

Antonia, as the familiarity of friendship increased, to ask Maurice for advice in her difficulties. One day—it was at the end of February—she entered his studio for the first time. The affair was urgent, and as he had not visited his neighbours for some days, she was obliged to anticipate his coming. When she entered he was at work upon his picture of 'The Death of Moreau.' Her eyes immediately rested upon the work, which was very nearly finished. She was the first person who had seen it except the painter himself.

Maurice noticed the direction of her look with an anxiety which he would not have confessed even to himself, and it was with a feeling of unconscious disappointment that she made no remark on what she saw, but entered at once on the business upon which she had come. Before she left him, however, he was determined to sound her upon the subject of his picture—not that he doubted the favourable nature of her opinion, but that, like all artists—and he certainly did not differ from his brethren in this respect—his soul longed for the encouragement of praise, especially as he felt sure that hers would not be unappreciative. He therefore said—

"I am glad that you have at last visited my magnificent *atelier*. I wish, though, I had something better to show you. You see even this is unfinished."

She looked well at the great historical picture of the dying Marshal, but said nothing. Something

in her expression reminded Maurice — strangely enough—of Tibald; and the fancy made him smile. In point of fact, she wanted to find something to say, but could not. Who among those who frequent the studios has not felt so a thousand times? And who among artists has not felt the chill that follows that unwilling silence on the part of some valued visitor? Not painters only, but musicians and poets also know it well—and their friends even better than they.

Antonia was certainly anything but a gushing person—she had no flattery at the end of her tongue.

"I see," she said at last. "Will it be long before it is quite finished? I never like to say what I think before the end."

"You are right in that. Processes should always be kept concealed."

"Besides, I am a bad judge of pictures," said Antonia.

"I doubt that, very much."

"But I am, indeed. At least I always differ from everybody."

"So do all good judges."

"But I mean from good judges."

"For instance?"

"Oh, I hardly know. In fact, I have never talked much about such things."

"But you must have seen a great many pictures?"

"A great many—but I remember very few."

"You must have seen more than I—I know only London and Paris and here,—you know Florence, and Rome, and Venice, besides Dresden and Paris."

"Yes—and Munich as well. But you beat me by London. Are there many pictures there?"

"A great many. But I envy you Italy."

"You will go there some day, I suppose?"

"I hope so, most devoutly. But do you not care for Art—for pictures, I mean?" Perhaps the unexpected failure of Moreau rankled in him a little.

"Not care for them? Why do you ask that?"

"You said they do not remain in your memory. Now that I rather look on as a test."

"I daresay you are right," she answered—"and yet I am not sure. The fact is, that when I leave a gallery I generally remember one picture and no more; and the more I look at, the less I can remember of the others and the more of the one. You know the Louvre?"

"Well."

"Well, then—out of all the pictures there—I believe I saw them all with my father—I only remember one."

"And that is——?"

"Our Blessed Lady."

"You mean the great Murillo, no doubt—I have known it affect others in the same way. But do you remember no more?"

"That, and an angel."

"I guess which you mean."

"And then in Florence I remember again Our Blessed Lady, and here——"

"What is it you know best here?"

"Our Lady again—but the most beautiful of all."

"I suppose you mean the San Sisto?"

"I daresay it is called so."

"But do you not remember my favourite—'La Notte'—the Coreggio?"

"Which is that?"

"The picture where Mary is bending over the cradle. Do you not remember it by the wonderful light streaming upon the mother's face from the glory of her child?"

"I remember! It is beautiful indeed. But the other—I know it by heart."

"It is indeed a great picture. But, somehow, it disappointed me."

"Disappointed you?"

"It is very heretical, but I confess it."

"What could you have expected, then?"

"I hardly know—but so it was."

"There—did I not tell you I am a bad judge?"

"But in this it is I, not you, who differ from the good judges."

"But you are a painter."

"We are both artists. Art is one. But what do you say, Antonia? Let us see the two pictures together, and decide the question."

"I shall always love the San Sisto best—but I love the other, too."

"Shall we go, however?"

Antonia consented with joy, and the visit to the gallery which ensued was by no means the last. It soon became even a matter of course that whenever Maurice had time and opportunity at his disposal, he spent it in company with the Italian girl at the gallery in the Neu-Markt. Her enthusiasm was at first intensely uncultivated; but she had, even at the beginning, and in a much higher degree than her more skilled companion, the faculty of going straight to the soul of a picture, and her free and impulsive criticism, though often really wrong, often threw upon the subjects which it touched a light which he could never otherwise have gained during the study of a life-time. He often rightly differed from her, but her remarks, even when wildest, were suggestive, and opened out to him new regions of idea and new lines of criticism. Her method of studying a picture was illustrative of her nature. She would stand before some painting, selected, Heaven alone knew why—often really from caprice, and very often apparently so—and wait before it in silence until she had established between it and herself a strange kind of sympathy. When in this state she was sometimes physically affected, in the same way as many persons are by music. The tears would come into her eyes, and

she became unconscious for a time of the things and people around her—of time and place—of all save the cause of her excitement. Her living human soul entered the dead canvass, and, as it were, raised it from the dead. As is almost always the case, her excitement became contagious, and Maurice himself could not help sometimes coming under its influence, and the oftener as time went on. When the *rapport* between herself and a painting was once established, it was easily renewed; and on entering the gallery afterwards, she was drawn at once to some painting which had acquired this sort of fascination over her. But, in time, the skill and knowledge of Maurice educated her as much as her enthusiasm had opened a new world to him, so that at last they nearly met half-way. And so they, the man and the woman, passed through the long lines of paintings as if through life — he through knowledge, she through emotion, helping and aiding each other to probe to its real depths the world of beautiful ideas—the world of Art, in which dwelt both their souls.

The following passage occurs in a letter written by Maurice to Lawson, in April :—

"You see that the iron of work is more and more entering into my soul—what I used to call legitimate work, I mean, and not my own picture. I wish, though, you could see the latter still. I don't

know what to say of it. I am sorry I chose such a subject, but I suppose I had better get it done. It was very wrong of me to go in for a battle-piece, with red coats, and so on. But still I had an idea, and should like you to help me to make it out.

"You know my love of speculating about other people. Well, my attempt to set the *maëstro* before you has set me thinking about many things. This is the result, if you care to have it, so far as he is concerned. It is my attempt to solve what used to appear to me the intensely prosaic nature of the man.

"Men of large natures, and women too, cannot use the small language of the world. The highest language of the world is inadequate for the expression of any but small ideas. Thus those who have large ideas must necessarily give up, as utterly vain, any attempt to *talk* them. They very soon find that it is utterly impossible. All superlatives and conventionally poetical expressions are thus quite meaningless, except when used to express the highest flight to which small minds can reach. A school-girl is quite justified in going into ecstasies of words, but how should the enthusiasm of a Tibald find vent? Not even the highest poetry can exactly express that form of enthusiasm which finds its true outlet in form and colour. How tame, to a very great painter, must appear any attempt to describe in words what can only be expressed by the hand.

"I believe this to be the reason why the talk of painters, like that of musicians, is generally confined to technicalities, about which they *can* talk, and of money, of which genius is as greedy as it is profuse—and why they, as a rule, believe only in small poetry, which only attempts to express small ideas.

"I imagine to myself, then, a nature full of impulse and passion that cannot be suppressed, denied its proper outlet, and the conventional idea of the enthusiast is the result. It would be always trying to pour itself into all sorts of channels—would be talking for ever, and incapable of doing anything. But, let it once find its right course, and it would flow on calmly and silently, doing great things, though bearing a smiling and perhaps even stupid front to the world. The enthusiasm would be there, but fully developed—it would have turned to energy.

"It is the most terrible thing that can happen to a man or woman to be denied, or not to be able to find, the proper outlet. And yet, I fear, it happens daily. This rather commonplace truth has come home to me of late with a new force, and as if it were a discovery of my own. I suppose you will say you knew it all long ago. I should have said I knew it too—but I should have been wrong."

CHAPTER VI.

May 2.—I have been just eleven months in Dresden to-day, and cannot help feeling that I have made good progress in the time. Certainly in many ways I am very different as a painter from what I was a year ago. I shall deserve to be able to get my bread, I hope and believe; but shall I ever be able to do anything really great? Shall I ever be able to carry out in truth one single idea?

I am not, however, altogether without encouragement. Tibald has certainly noticed me very favourably of late, and clearly takes an interest in me. He no longer contents himself with "*So!*" and "Hm!"—he really goes out of his road to give me advice. But independently of Tibald—though it is no doubt owing to him—I certainly feel my ideas about all artistic matters considerably enlarged and expanded. For one thing, I begin to see clearly—what I have never properly understood till lately—that Art, to be worth anything, must be its own end. Of course I have said so a hundred thousand times, but I believed and said it only in the way that a man believes and says that he is mortal; he would not dream of denying the assertion, of course, and would laugh at the absurdity of any one who might be so daring as to do so—but the truth of it, I see now, was never part of myself. I really do

not seem to be the same person who began to paint that absurd daub of 'The Death of Moreau.' How strange is a sudden waking up like this! I can almost date the moment of it.

There is only one thing about which I do not feel quite at ease. I have the same old desire still to paint a picture now, and at once. I know that Tibald would say, "No—not yet," but I must let myself out somehow. Perpetual and unvaried taking in is very right, no doubt, but it restrains one's energy rather too much. I really must *do* something, as well as learn. I shall not attempt anything very immense, though, this time.

May 7.—What a strange girl Antonia is! And yet, somehow, I understand her, though I should certainly be unable to give any idea of her character to any one else. Suppose I were writing to Lawson, for instance, and wanted to give him my impression of her, what in the world could I say? Very enthusiastic—yes, but so are a million women. Good natural talent for Art—so have a million more. Very uncultivated—well, how few women are not! So that won't do. I should only have described a woman very little above the average, and not really like Antonia at all. Perhaps I could get at it by means of cataloguing her peculiarities. For instance, she is the only enthusiastic woman I ever came across who is silent—from which I should infer that her enthusiasm is real. She is the only

clever woman I ever saw who is not always saying clever things—so I infer some other obscure virtue in her; and the only uncultivated woman who does or does not something or other quite as much to the point; and so on. Well, it isn't worth the trying, for I certainly don't want to describe her to anybody, and I need not try to explain to myself why I think I understand her.

I wish, though, I could help her to cultivate her own special talent—music. I believe that she would do on the stage. She has all the qualities, and is a born Italian as well, which is a piece of good fortune that ought not to be wasted. Well, I must try and make a little money—I should rather like to play the art patron to some one who would do me justice.

The worst of it is that she ought not to be wasting all this time if she is ever really to do anything. . . . By the way, a good idea! There is one thing I *can* do—I will hire a piano, and she shall use it as much as she likes—or, better, it shall stand in their room. I shall ask them to take care of it for me as a favour, for I certainly have no room for it here, and my work will not be disturbed—that would never do.

May 29.—I almost wish to heaven that I had never thought of the piano, or else that the lady would let it alone sometimes—say for half an hour or so once-a-week.

Perhaps, however, when the summer is really

here, I shall have a little less of it. If she is at all like me she will find Art go a little to the dogs when Nature has it all her own way again—especially when Art calls to work and Nature to idleness. I wonder what Lawson is doing—I have not heard from him for an age. But then, on the other hand, I have not written to him—and what is the advantage of Friendship if it cannot exist without correspondence? That is the feminine idea—but then feminine friendship, I take it, is a very queer thing.

Well, if I mean to enjoy myself a little when the summer comes, I must work all the better now. Certainly I have a very good example, if not always before my eyes, yet always in my ears. What a glorious voice it is! I must manage to get acquainted with somebody or other who may be able to do something for it—it is infinitely too good to be lost in the chorus, and the uncle and aunt seem a couple of imbeciles. If I could but get that splendid voice of hers only half a mile away from myself, what a relief it would be to me! Perhaps I might manage to do something with this picture of mine in that case.

Certainly we painters stand at a great disadvantage with respect to musicians. We can't annoy them with our practising, but they can drive us to desperation with theirs. I must find out some method of revenge.

How she is attacking those exercises! Well—I give in—and in sheer despair will attack mine.

To-morrow I will lay in a stock of cotton wool.

June 16.—Summer is come again, and I have wasted its first real day by—working.

I am ashamed of myself, but the fact remains. I had made such good intentions only last night. I was not to do a stroke of work, but was to walk by myself to my old place on the Leipzig road. What an age it is since I was there last! There I was to drink a bottle of Rüdesheimer, and then do whatever I might feel inclined, except go back to the town. What demon put it into my head to give just one touch to my confounded canvass? Alas! I yielded to temptation—the touch multiplied itself—and here I am still, with my head one whirl of scales. Could I not even have bought the cotton wool?

Well, I vow that the very next fine day I will not even look towards my easel. To-morrow—well, I may as well finish off what I have been doing to-day—and the next day I must spend entirely with Tibald—and the next, I have promised to take Antonia to the theatre—and the next—well, I will do nothing as soon as possible at least.

And now let me see what I have done to-day. I should like Antonia to see it also, though—to judge how far I have succeeded in working out that idea of hers. I will get her to look at it to-morrow, when

it will be in a better state, and make her give me her opinion.

I must write to Lawson soon—one day next week, perhaps. And yet, perhaps, I had better wait till I hear from him. I don't even know whether he is in Rome or not; and, if he did not get my letter there, I don't suppose he would get it at all.

What shall I do with myself this evening? I have been keeping myself so close lately that I am beginning to lose all my acquaintance. I could go to Emil's, certainly—but, ten to one, he will be at the theatre, and I am getting tired of that eternal method of killing time. I might take a stroll on the terrace—I should be sure to meet some one I knew—but no, I think I will stay at home, after all. In that case I may as well fill my meerschaum. Confound it! I left it last night at Salvi's. Well, then, there is no help for it—I must go over and get it. That will have one good effect at least—it may stop the piano for a time.

June 27.—I thought yesterday that my new picture was really getting on; but on looking at it this morning I am disgusted. I think I shall give it up. I never felt before such a sickening sense of imperfection. The worst is, that I cannot see how I am going wrong. I have already stood before the canvas for two hours at least, and can find nothing to alter, except—the whole thing, which I might therefore just as well cut to pieces at once.

It is so frightfully dead—a mere copy of a possible combination of natural forms, and nothing more. In the hands of a great master a touch or two would put into it the life-giving soul—but that is just what I despair of doing. If I could only let out into it something of what I have received from that Titian we studied yesterday, I should be content. If I cannot create, surely I might hope to reproduce. But this is neither creation nor reproduction, nor can be. I may as well dismiss all hope, if this is the best I can do. There are enough mere copyists in the world without me. . . .

"Antonia?—I never heard you come in."

"You were at work? Do I disturb you? I only came to ask—but how pale and sad you look! Are you not well?"

"Oh, it is nothing. I am only disgusted."

"What has happened?"

"Look at this."

"Ah, that is beautiful!—but——"

"Yes, '*but!*'—that is the very point."

"It is not finished?"

"Not finished—but done with."

"Shall you not finish it then?"

"I cannot."

"Ah, you are tired of it. Yet it wants so little—it is a pity."

"Tired? I am sick of it—and it is just that little I cannot do. You see, Antonia, just think of the

San Sisto and all those great pictures we know so well, and then look at this. *They* are alive."

"And so will this be soon."

"Never, without the hand of a master."

"Of course not. But it must live soon—it wants so little."

"Do you not see what that little is? It is everything."

"You mean life—soul?"

"That is what I mean. Ah, Antonia, if I could throw into my hand the soul that you throw into your voice, this would be a picture then."

"I throw nothing into my music—I only find what is there. It is easy."

"Would I could find it so!"

"Ah, my friend, you feel as I often feel. Shall I tell you what I do when I cannot make music come right?"

"What?"

"I do three things—I laugh at myself; I call myself stupid; and I try again."

"And if that does not answer?"

"Then—I don't try it again. One cannot do everything, you know. But you are not to be like me in that. You must try my first remedy. You have already called yourself stupid, and now you must laugh."

"By all means, Antonia, if you will make me."

"Oh, you shall be made to laugh! But you

must do something else too. You must promise me not to look at your picture for three whole days."

"I won't look at it for three whole years if you like."

"No—but you must promise me something more still."

"Well?"

"I will not tell you unless you promise."

"I promise, then."

"You must spend the three days among the woods. You must make some sketches, and you must give them to me."

"But, Antonia——"

"You have promised."

"But I have promised Herr Tibald——

"But you have promised me."

"But——"

"There!—there is a cover over the poor picture! Now come over to us, and try to make us laugh. And to-morrow you will sketch me some oaks, the finest you can find, and some water—and the next day some more, and the next day too—and then——"

"Then?"

"We will make a great hole in your picture!—How the sun shines! It is almost like Milan."

"Would you like to go into the country, Antonia?"

"Oh, of all things!"

"Then could not you, and your uncle and aunt, help me to get through one or two of the three days? As you have condemned me to exile you ought to make it as endurable as possible."

"Oh, my aunt in the woods! That is a good joke."

"Well, what do you say? Any way I will come over to them, and talk of it."

July 1.—I certainly never spent my time in a more absurdly idyllic manner than I have spent the last three days. But I have as certainly enjoyed them. I believe I wanted rest, and so far Antonia was a good physician. Now, let me see this picture of mine. But here comes my doctor.

"My friend, I have come to see you make the hole."

"Wait a minute, Antonia! I have an idea."

"But it will not do."

"Ah, you are laughing at me. Do you know what happened yesterday?"

"What? An adventure?"

"Yes."

"What was it?"

"I found this picture of mine—where do you suppose?"

"Where?"

"That is my secret. But have I not told you that Art is One?"

"How mysterious! Come, I am waiting to see you make the hole."

"Well—I found it in a song, into which you *had* put life, for once."

"*Pazzie!*—now then—the hole!"

"Look—I will prove to you that I understood your song. Give it me."

"What? The knife—or the scissors?"

"Neither—we will try the palette first. But don't go yet—I shall want you."

July 8.—"Well, Antonia?"

"Not quite, yet. But it will do—let me see—in three days."

"In three days? I could not find myself another three days' work here. I should be overdoing things."

"*You* have nothing more to do."

"What has to be done, then?"

"My friend, now you ought to call yourself stupid indeed. Cover it up, and look at it in three days."

"For the fairies to finish?"

"Yes—for the fairies. When a thing is good, the fairies always come and make it better. So cover it, and go and tell every one that you have painted a picture."

"But have I in truth done so?"

"My dear friend, you know in your own soul that you have."

"Not so, Antonia! I know it in yours."

August 5.—"Antonia!"

"My friend?"

"Do you believe what the world says?"

"When I like. What does it say now? It says so many things."

"It says that the English Herr, Edward Maurice, the pupil of Tibald the painter, has painted a great picture."

"Oh, my dear friend, I am glad indeed! Has Herr Tibald seen it?"

"Yes—and this is indeed something to be proud of—he agrees with the world."

"And you—what do you say yourself?"

"I say that the world is wrong, and Tibald too, for once."

"Bravo! It is so likely you think so."

"I do, though. I say that the person who painted that picture is not the English Herr, Edward Maurice, the pupil of Tibald, but, through his hands, the Italian Fräulein, Antonia Salvi—the pupil of Raphael and of Titian. My dear Antonia, you cannot tell what I owe you."

"'*Anch' io pittore!*' I congratulate myself heartily, then."

"Believe me, it is so. And now will you let me do something for you, in my turn?"

"That depends on what it is."

"I have just received a very valuable commission. It is a Government one, and I was recom-

mended by Tibald. In fact, my good fortune is such that I wish my friends to share it. No, Antonia — I do not ask you to accept anything that you may not accept freely. Heaven alone knows how much of my good fortune — I speak seriously—I owe to your companionship. I now wish to carry out a very great wish of mine. I wish you to complete yourself as a singer, and myself to be the means by which you will achieve your fame."

CHAPTER VII.

It was not a hard task to overcome the few difficulties that stood in the way of carrying out Maurice's scheme. And now came to Antonia the dawn of a new life and the fulfilment of her old one. The fulfilment of the old, because she had at last found scope for the full exercise of her talents, and was fairly on the road to finding scope for her genius also; the dawning of a new life, because—was it not only to be expected that her warm and sympathetic nature should seek to find fulfilment too?

And so it happened, as indeed was inevitable. When perfect sympathy exists between a woman and one who possesses mental qualities which she has not, and which she therefore, after the manner of women, exaggerates, and when this sympathy is

combined with the undoubting belief that her own feelings, whatever they may be, are appreciated and returned, there can be but one result. In Antonia's case, a passionate nature, intensifying every thought and every emotion, carried her along the pleasant and natural but dangerous road, without allowing her to stop and examine her own heart; while her unconsciousness of self and want of feminine vanity made her place Maurice upon a higher level in comparison with herself than perhaps he deserved. He was, no doubt, really above her in some things —in delicacy of perception, for instance, which with him was the result of refinement and cultivation, and was founded on comparison and judgment, while with her it depended almost entirely upon an instinct which was very apt to make mistakes. Again, he had a quality in which she was almost entirely deficient—that which leads the possessor of it to look upon human nature and the outside world with a constant view to artistic relation, and which sharpens, subtilises, and fills with life the brain, while it renders the heart cool and equable in its pulsations. He was, in a word, essentially the artist of talent and culture, and so far was the superior; but then she had genius, which, when once it has received the seed of culture, does not cease to produce tares, it is true, but of every good grain sown therein brings forth a thousand-fold.

This exuberant nature of hers, hitherto narrowed

and confined, rapidly expanded under the influences of love and art. Her personal appearance even shared in the change; and, without becoming beautiful, she began imperceptibly to acquire the charm of manner which is the privilege of those only whose souls are large and fair. Her figure gained a kind of stately elasticity, her bright eyes brightened, she attended more carefully to matters of dress and appearance, she looked younger and happier. It was in her the artist and the woman flowering together. Gradual as the change was, Maurice could not help being struck by it; but, though by no means stupid in such matters, and certainly not without his share of the vanity common to all men where women are concerned, he never connected himself in any way with it.

The life lived by both was now happy in the extreme. Maurice had already tasted the delightful foretaste of fame, and nothing had occurred to deaden its effect. He was no longer hampered by poverty, he was already distinguished in that art which he now loved entirely and for its own sake, his society was courted, his intellectual nature gratified by the friendships that he was enabled to form among men, and his deeper needs of the heart by what so few men ever find—and the highest and best of men the least often of all—the full sympathy and devotion of a woman who could keep pace with him in all his advances, console and encourage,

praise and appreciate, learn and teach—to whom he could open all his heart, and who gave him all hers in return.

And her happiness was complete also. Her love had grown so gradually, and had become so much a part of her nature, that she never thought about it. It was like the air she breathed; and she was never disturbed by the most passing doubt. How should a woman like her bestow all her soul in vain? It could not be so in the very nature of things.

Meanwhile her progress in study was rapid and brilliant. It can scarcely be said, however, that she astonished the skilful musician under whose instruction she placed herself; he accepted her at once for what she was, and she had to pass through no preliminary course of "*so's!*" and "*hm's!*" It was not long before her teacher procured her an engagement at the Court Church, and she had every prospect of coming to terms with the Director of the theatre at Dresden, where it was thought best for her to overcome the difficulties of a first appearance.

The friendship between herself and the painter was equally beneficial to both, so far as related to artistic development. Each supplied a want in the other. She supplied his deficiency in enthusiasm, while he rectified the somewhat uneven balance of her nature, in which enthusiasm was carried to so high a pitch. The relation between them was thus

of a peculiar and unusual nature. No word of love had as yet arisen between them to disturb them or break their perfect confidence. The love that was felt by Antonia was too strong and too real, and had enveloped her too completely, to make her afraid, and he—was he not the lover of Grace Owen?

Maurice now lived in good lodgings in the Schlosz-Gasse, but he removed to them from his old attic much against the grain. The daily presence of Antonia had become almost a necessary part of his life and of his work; and, though he affected to rejoice at having regained his peace of ear, the absence of the voice, of whose industry he had so often complained, was missed by him more than he himself imagined.

So weeks and months passed on, during which the two lived a kind of ideal life without ever pausing to think of the real nature of their feelings towards each other. The days resembled each other so closely, and were so calm and pleasant, that it never occurred to either that their present way of life could ever end. But the inevitable end must come at last—and it came.

One spring evening, nearly a year since Edward Maurice had achieved his first sudden and unexpected success, he found himself alone with Antonia at her lodging. Her uncle had a temporary engagement at Leipzig, and her aunt had accompanied him. She herself was singing at the piano

when Maurice entered, so that, her back being towards the door, she did not see him. When she had finished he made an exclamation of applause. She turned round.

"That is not fair," she said, "to listen when I am singing to myself."

"I am very glad that I did so, though. I have found out an important secret about you by it."

"What is that?"

"That you sing better to yourself alone than to an audience. That is common among amateurs, but not among artists."

"Is that a compliment, or not?"

"It doesn't sound like one, I admit. What I mean is, that the singer who takes equal care when alone, and finds her own heart the most sympathetic audience, must love art in the very highest way, and not at all for the thalers and groschen."

Antonia laughed. "But I do love it for the thalers and groschen," she answered.

"Less than you think, I fancy," replied Maurice. "But *vive l' argent*, nevertheless. I certainly shall not quarrel with you."

"But I mean to quarrel with you. I would really rather that you would not listen when I don't know it." Antonia spoke seriously, and as though she meant what she said.

"There—do not scold me, but I cannot say I repent. Have you seen the Herr Director lately?"

"A hundred times, but we cannot agree. We are both too fond of the groschen, I think."

"You are quite right—don't let him get hold of you for nothing. I would go to Leipzig sooner—they would be glad of you there just now."

"Of course—and if I had only been wise enough to drop a hint to our Director here that I was uncertain where I should come out, he would soon have come to terms. But I have rather set my heart on Dresden, and he knows it too well."

"He will come round at last; so many people here would be angry, if he did not. So hold out, by all means."

"Trust me! And you—— how is the fresco to-day?"

"Oh, as usual—that is to say, getting on slowly enough. I will take you to see it in a day or two—only I am always afraid of you."

"Why?"

"Because you are always comparing me against Murillo, and Raphael, and Titian,—which is grossly unfair."

"Should you like me to judge your picture against the Tinker of Mieris, then?"

"God forbid! That would be outside me altogether—the spirit of the Dutchman would stand aghast in his grave at my vagueness. So don't be absurd, but play me something. I won't ask you to sing any more—that would be unfair in my turn."

"I thought you were going to the theatre to-night."

"So I was, but felt tired and lazy. I don't think I shall go there much again before a certain occasion."

"Thank you. So my music will suit you when you are tired and lazy."

"At all events it will suit me now."

"Perhaps I am tired and lazy too."

"You are never lazy, and if you are tired, I will not be hard on you."

He took a chair and sat down at the piano close to her side.

She put out her hand and took up at random a piece of music from the heap that lay all round her in the wildest confusion. She never kept anything in its place, and always had to trust to instinct to find what she wanted. The piece to which her hand was guided was a rather light sonata of Mozart. She began to play from the notes, but the evening light was gradually diminishing, so that she had to trust to memory more and more. As she did not know this sonata very accurately her performance became rather vague, and she began to make repeats, and to try experiments in expression. Her mood at the time was by no means in harmony with the character of the music, but still she went on, without knowing why, until, mingling the composer's fancies with her own,

she created an effect which was that of Mozart exaggerated and almost caricatured — the joy of earth rendered wildly sad.

There was something in the deep, almost grotesque, yet pathetic irony of the music, as she played it,—in the soft, warm dimness of the spring evening that entered at the open window,—in the gentle swaying motion with which Antonia always kept time to her own playing,—and even in the bare sombreness of the room itself, that had an effect upon the sensitive nature of the painter something like that of autumn on the year—the closing of the ever too short summer, and the warning that, very soon, no good things will be left in life save the memories of the past, and such sorry makeshifts for warmth and joy as winter allows. He seemed as though he felt the roses of his life —they had been of late so many and so sweet— dropping prematurely from their thorns, and the fragrance of its white lilies changing into the sad, heavy odour of fallen leaves. Antonia, too, seemed more than touched by the same melancholy spirit. The very soul of the great master whose music was before her, who knew so well that from laughter to tears the interval is imperceptible, who felt so fully how beautiful is earth, but how sad and how vain, after all, is its beauty—in whose brightest strains we seem always to hear the words, "Earth is very fair, but how soon it passeth! Let us eat and drink,

for to-morrow we die"—seemed present with them both. It would have been quite impossible for either to have uttered a word. Gradually Maurice lost all definite idea of the sounds which never ceased to float around, and felt them only in his heart. A great dread of the end was upon him. It seemed as though his happiness, his life itself, depended upon the duration of those wandering sounds, and that, when they should cease, all would cease too. What Antonia felt, who can guess? But suddenly —what caprice, what impulse, what strange power stirred her, she, at least, could never have told —she began to sing softly, and to herself—for she had, by now, become unconscious of aught save dreams—that air from 'Le Nozze di Figaro,' which is the very soul of yearning, passionate, yet undoubting love—the languor of joyful longing and the deep melancholy of intense passion—the joy of sadness, and the utter sadness of joy—

> "Deh vieni, non tardar, O Gioja bella!
> Vieni ove amore per goder t'appella;
> Finche risplende in ciel notturna face,
> Finche l'aria è dolce, e il mondo tace
> . . . . .
> Vieni, mio ben!"

The secret of the hour was told—the veil of both their lives at last was torn away.

When the last notes of the song had died unheard, her wonderful eyes, soft and bright even in

the darkness, and full of a strange light, were drawn towards his. His face was pale, and he trembled.

"Antonia!" he said, but in so low a tone that his voice was inaudible. Her heart heard it, however, and understood it too, for the next moment she was in his arms.

It was late when they parted. When Maurice returned to his lodging he found two letters for him, one from Lawson, the other from the father of Grace Owen.

CHAPTER VIII.

Grace Owen—where was she in the memory of Edward Maurice?

It may be opposed to poetic theory, but it is not the less true, that love affords no contradiction to the common experience of men that a great change of scene, combined with a still greater change of habits, associations, and aims, is fully sufficient to cast a very thick veil indeed over old aims, old scenes, and old feelings. No one is wilfully inconstant, but no one is proof against involuntary forgetfulness. The saying of Horace about those who hurry beyond sea is daily condemned by facts. So much does a change of country, with all its attendant and consequent changes, alter our feelings and almost our very nature, that, to all intents and purposes, a man who is subjected to it very

seldom remains the same person, even in his own eyes. Who even among those whose experience of change of country has been confined to an autumn tour has not found that, before three days are well over, a cloud has formed itself between his immediate present and his immediate past; before three weeks, a thick wall of new ideas and new associations? But he must either be very old in years, or extremely unimpressible, or very abnormally constituted, who, having changed not only his country but his opinions, his views about life and all his aims and desires—having held no communication with his own country for two eventful years, having been surrounded during that time by intensely powerful influences,—remains the same in his feelings as before the change came about. Now Edward Maurice was not old, not unimpressionable, and not constituted differently from other men of his mental level, and so Grace Owen had gradually come to dwell less and less in his thoughts, until of late he often spent days together without giving her a single recollection. Still, until this evening, he had never dreamed of being inconstant to her, and no doubt fancied, and would have asserted, that he was as much in love with her as ever. If she had been false to him, he would probably have been extremely indignant, and have looked upon himself as deeply injured, and, if he had ever examined himself closely, would

probably have made an effort to thrust Antonia from his heart. But, as with Antonia, so with himself, his love had grown so gradually that self-examination had been rendered impossible, and the more so that no obstacles had lain in the way which might have ripened it or laid it bare prematurely. There had been no absence, no interference of friends, no occasions for jealousy, no quarrels; all had been sunshine, and constant intercourse, and undoubting trust. The course of my life is pleasant, let it run on. There is no danger to me who love Grace, none to Antonia who is absorbed in art. Such had been the nearest approach to self-examination that Maurice had made during the whole period, and that not often and never consciously. Thus, for some time, matters between himself and Antonia had come to a crisis that needed only the slightest accident to develop itself fully. Such an accident had now happened, and both now knew their own hearts and the heart of each other.

Certainly no one was less than Grace in the mind of her professed lover when he returned to his lodgings and found the two letters. He remembered now with anything but pleasure that his two years of probation, to which he had not long before looked forward with such impatience, had more than come to an end. He would have given almost anything save the love of Antonia, if he could have pur-

chased two years more. "However," he thought, "since the time must have come at last, perhaps it is best now. Besides, I don't deserve that my path through the affair should be one of roses." He opened first the letter from Grace's father.

"Hotel Meurice, Paris,
June 10, 184–.

"My dear Edward,—Though I thought it best that there should be no direct communication between us during the period of your study, I have taken care, through others, to keep myself informed of what you have been doing. I am glad to have heard nothing but what is even more than satisfactory. Your industry and your character are spoken of in the highest terms, and these, together with your talent, have, it seems, found their reward. I congratulate you most heartily, and am fully prepared, on my own part, to keep my promise.

"But are you still in the same mind? I presume so, as your own sense of honour, under the circumstances, would have led you to inform me, if otherwise. But now those circumstances have changed, and I think it right to inform you at once how matters stand. If you *now* wish to withdraw I shall not blame you—you will only be taking a wise and prudent course. But I am forced to put your affection for Grace very strongly to the proof.

"I grieve to say that I am no longer a rich man.

It is unnecessary to tell you how my misfortunes have come about—that I will keep to another opportunity. I will only say now that they have been allowed by all, even those who suffered with me, to have been misfortunes only and not faults. But it comes to this—that I have not enough left to support myself and Grace in reasonable comfort—and, what is worse, I fear that my state of health will never permit me to take any steps to recover my position.

"You yourself cannot yet be in a position to marry at once. Grace has therefore thought it best—against my wish, certainly, but it seems inevitable—to attempt to do something. Indeed there is no help for it. Her plan is to spend the next year or two on the Continent, so that we may live as cheaply as we can, and at the same time, that she may learn to turn her musical talent to the best account.

"We are accordingly on our way to Dresden, which place we have fixed on because you are there. If, however, you think it best to change your mind—I shall not blame you, nor will Grace—let me know at once, and we will endeavour to avoid a meeting. I cannot remain here to await your answer, as I am obliged to save every penny. So the best way will be for you to address a note for me to the Hôtel de Pologne, at Dresden, so that I may receive it immediately on my arrival, contain-

ing your answer. If the tenor of it should induce me not to remain, we should continue our journey to Vienna, where I have friends and introductions.

"Grace is well in health. She does not know I am writing to you.

"This is indeed a terrible overthrow of the prospects of all of us—of yours as much as any one's. But I trust that both you and I are good Christians enough to submit with hope and patience to the will of God, whatever it may be.

"Hoping to find your answer on my arrival, believe me to be, yours always,

"RICHARD OWEN."

"NEWMAN STREET, LONDON,
June 9.

"MY DEAR MAURICE,—I am going to send you some very bad news indeed. You perhaps may have heard of it independently of me, but reports are such strange things that I hasten to tell you what I know.

"Well then, there is no mincing the matter—old Owen has gone to complete smash—as complete as can be imagined. What is worse, matters can never be set right again with him, and he, I fear, is sinking fast. I am not man of business enough to tell you all the causes and circumstances—they were awfully complicated, but no one blames Owen in the least—that, at all events, you will be glad to

hear. I myself came back from Rome, between which place and Florence I have been getting rid of the last year or thereabouts, as soon as I heard of the affair, to see if I could be of any use, for the sake of old times. As you know, the poor girl has no relations who are in the least likely to do anything for her; besides, when one is down, relations are worse even than friends, if that is possible. Not only do they never help you, but they give good advice into the bargain—from which may the gods preserve us all for evermore!—and when you don't take it—what sane man ever does?—they shake their heads and shrug their shoulders, and say that at all events they have done their best, and let you go to the devil. *Crede experto.* Where was I? Well, I have seen her, and I can give you at least the consolation of knowing that she has kept her health and her looks also, though of course she has lost a little of her brightness, for the time. She was very glad to see me, and, as I could do nothing else, I tried to do what I have just been inveighing against, to give good advice. Like a brave and sensible girl, however, she scorned it altogether. I don't think she would even take yours. If these things are done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? You will certainly have a wife with a will of her own. She has made up her mind, as her father can do nothing, to go abroad and make music her profession instead of

her amusement. Well, she has good talent—at least we used to think so—and might make something of it. She won't, of course, be a Pasta, but she ought to be able to pay her baker's and cheesemonger's bills. Still, I hope from my soul it will be unnecessary. Of course no one here now knows your exact position. You could not write to Grace, and you would not write to me. Well, we are in the same boat, and so I must not complain, and you may, or may not, be well off. If you are, and your prospects are as good as the rumour of the studios —that abominable liar!—vaguely says, well and good. If you are not, I suppose the lady must go into training. Time will show. The only wise thing to which I could persuade her was to begin the world at Dresden, where you will be able to keep them both, and, perhaps, be able, if you still frequent the society of musical people, to put her in the way of what she ought to do. But I don't suppose she would have taken my advice on that point either, unless her own inclinations had accorded with it. As it was, she made a little fight of it, but her game was very open, and she yielded to my arguments as soon as I made a pretence of giving them up.

"She knows I am writing to you, but, as she will not send any but the coldest messages, I will not repeat them. I do not think they soar above kindest regards. You will, however, see both father and

daughter, and hear what she has to say to you, without having to trust to a third person, in a very few days. They start to-day, and to-morrow will be in Paris. The father means, he tells me, to write to you himself from there, and then they will proceed immediately to Dresden. But, to tell you the truth, my dear fellow, I am very much afraid they will never arrive there. Of course, I do not hint my suspicions to Grace—I consider it to be my mission at present to keep her spirits up as much as possible—but her father's life is not worth a day's purchase. It is as well to be prepared for the worst. He is very weak, and has violent palpitations of the heart on the least occasion of exertion or excitement, and an acute pain apparently across the muscles of his chest. Perhaps you will say it is folly for them to travel—but what is to be done? I myself believe that anything will be better for him than to remain in England, and Dr Lewis tells me he thinks so too.

"This is all I have to say now. I offered to see them to Dresden myself, but—alas and woe is me! —the evil genius who takes charge of my pocket says 'impossible;' and that other evil genius who watches over all people who have money to lend, confirms the decree. Even my friends who would have spared me a pound or two if I were going to remain in England, would have nothing to do with me when they heard I was going abroad; and those

who would have helped me if they could, are of course in the same state as myself. As it is, I must wait some weeks before I can get back to Florence, where I now have a little copying work to do—very little, indeed, but still enough to keep me in not the very worst tobacco and not the very blackest wine—the only things upon which I spend more than two *lire* at a time.

"In two hours I accompany the Owens to Dover—I wish I was going farther, but *che fare?* The worst is, I fear Grace may take it unkindly of me—but I daresay she guesses the reason pretty well.

"Now, my dear Maurice, I have written this letter rather lightly, but you know my way. I need not say how much I really feel for you all, especially for that poor girl. If I can possibly be of any service to you here—I *must* remain in London three weeks more at the least—write to me at the old place. I am not living there, but they take in my letters.

"Good-bye. I suppose that in the course of this extraordinary muddle called life, and somewhere in this extremely small place called the earth, we shall meet again one of these days. If not—well, I suppose it won't much matter, though I confess I should be sorry. Let me hear from you. Grace has promised for you, so you will have to buy some pens at last. They are not very expensive things,

and not difficult to discover, although you seem to think so. Ever, my dear Maurice, yours,

"FRANK LAWSON."

Maurice sat down at the table as one stupefied. He had to read both letters at least twice over before he was able fully to comprehend their meaning. When he at last succeeded, he sat for some time longer without being able to realise his position. Not that he was in doubt—it was clear that gratitude, duty, honour, all summoned him to fulfil his engagement to Grace Owen. Had she not bestowed herself on him when no marriage appeared too brilliant for her, and when he was scarcely able to find daily bread? Had it not been through her father's kindness that no obstacles had been thrown in his way, save those which were obviously necessary? Had it not been at her father's expense that he had been enabled to acquire the position he held already in the world of art and the brilliant prospects that lay before him? More than this, there was no attempt to force him to keep his engagement now that circumstances were altered—he was left free to do what seemed best for himself. And Grace herself, who had waited for him for two long years—had she not a right to look to him for self-sacrificing protection? It would be base to have obtained her love while she was rich and he poor, and as soon as she

became almost destitute and he had acquired the means of marrying to throw her aside. As regarded Grace, it was not a question of love at all —the question was simply whether he would or would not act like a gentleman. But Antonia—had he no duty towards her?

He owed her also gratitude. Not all the wealth of Richard Owen, told a thousand times, not all the skill and experience of Tibald, could have done for Edward Maurice what the sympathy and enthusiasm of the Italian had accomplished. He felt that although to Owen he owed his education, it was to Antonia that he owed his success. It would be like robbing her to lay his laurels at the feet of another. It was Antonia, not Grace, who had encouraged him, who had consoled him, who had gone through all his labours with him step by step; it was she who had toiled with him—it was she who should share that toil's reward. She, too, had claims upon his duty and his honour—she who had bestowed herself upon him freely and fully, and had given up to him that life which, once lost, is lost for ever. Was she, so intensely capable of suffering, to be tossed aside for no fault of her own—her magnificent nature, with all its wealth of love and passion, to be checked and poisoned? She would suffer far more than Grace. Besides, he loved her and she him—their souls were married already. With regard to her, it was scarcely even a question of

acting as a gentleman—it was, rather, whether he was capable of acting the part of a brave and honest man. After all, Grace claimed what he had not to give—his love. Marriage with her could only lead to misery in the long-run, and the immediate effect upon Antonia would be terrible indeed. On the other hand, to be despised by Grace as a mere fortune-seeker, as a man without the most ordinary notions of honour, to be utterly degraded in the opinion of all his friends, to be contemptible even to himself—could he bear this? Death would be better.

So he sat and thought till morning came. He then threw himself on his bed and fell into a heavy sleep, which lasted far into the day. When he woke his resolution was formed.

CHAPTER IX.

The next day Maurice left the following note at the Hôtel de Pologne, directed to Mr Owen, with orders that it should be delivered as soon as possible:—

"My dear Sir,—I need not say how deeply I sympathise with you in your misfortunes. But I do say that nothing that has happened, or that can happen, will make the smallest difference to me

with regard to Grace. I could almost be selfish enough to be glad that now there can be no suspicion as to my motives in claiming her hand, and it shall be the pride and aim of my life to protect her and endeavour to make her happy, and to act towards yourself as a good son.

"I will write no more now, as you will see me as soon as I hear that you are arrived. Till then, I shall call at the hotel daily to make inquiries.

"With my kindest love to Grace, and with all possible respect and gratitude towards yourself, believe me to be, my dear sir, yours most sincerely,

"Edward Maurice."

He did not call on Antonia that day. With her now lay the most difficult part of the business—the part that would make them both miserable, perhaps for both their lives. He ought not to be accused of weakness for dreading the interview. He would have been a strong-minded man indeed if he could have looked forward with calmness to a meeting which must end in despair. The next day he did call, but found her out—perhaps, unconsciously to himself, he fixed on an hour when she would probably be absent. He left, however, a pencil note on her table.

"Dearest Antonia,—Will you take care to be in, this evening? I tried to see you to-day, but

failed. What I have to say is most important—most unhappy for both of us. I shall have to ask your forgiveness for having kept a secret from you that must alter our lives for ever. It is impossible to explain myself farther in writing. You will hate me for ever, I know—and your forgiveness is too much to ask—and I shall not ask for it. I shall hate myself—but, whatever happens, you must not think that I cease to love you, or that I have wilfully deceived you. E. M."

In the evening he went to her lodgings. On the way he more than half repented of the step which he had taken, and which he had now rendered irrevocable. His conscience was ill at ease, although he had taken the course that reason told him was right. "Perhaps she has not returned," hope whispered to him—"perhaps I may yet find the note unopened on the table." What he might be inclined to do in such a case he dared not confess to himself. But then there was, in any case, that other letter at the hotel which it was probably too late to recall.

He reached Antonia's lodgings at last, and, with a sick and heavy heart, knocked at the door, and soon heard a quick light step hasten to open to him. He grew faint, and the walls seemed to swim round him. Then he was conscious of a soft warm hand holding his own, and of a gentle arm supporting

him to a seat, on which he fainted away. The struggle through which he had passed had, like physical pain when too great to be borne, found relief at last in temporary death. When he came to himself, Antonia was kneeling by his side, and bathing his temples with her handkerchief.

As soon as he had passed through the agony caused by a return to life and memory, he looked into her eyes; but he read in them nothing more than solicitude for himself.

"Thank God!" she exclaimed. "But do not move—lie still—I will open the window and let in the air. There—are you not better?" She spoke anxiously, and looked alarmed, but there was nothing farther to be learned from her manner.

"I am all right again now," said Maurice, sitting up. "It was only a fainting-fit. I wonder what could have made me so absurd. I am certainly not used to that sort of thing."

"But are you quite well again? Well, sit there quietly, and let me give you some wine."

"I think that will be the best medicine for me," he said, attempting to smile.

She brought him the wine, and he drank a glass of it. Then, drawing her towards him, and taking her hand, he said, nerving himself as well as he could for the purpose of the interview, but speaking calmly—

"You have read my note, Antonia?" he said.

"What note?" she asked.

"The note I left here to-day."

"I received none."

Maurice glanced quickly towards the table. It was not there. A desperate feeling of hope rose within him.

"I left a note in pencil upon your table when I called this morning, asking you to be at home in the evening."

"Ah! I wondered that I had not heard from you. Perhaps it is there now." She went to the table and looked all about it, but in vain, and then returned to his side.

"The note seems to have prepared a surprise for me, it appears," she said, "for it is certainly gone."

"Look once more, Antonia—look round the room." He could not help speaking excitedly and as though much depended on the result.

"Why, how anxious you are about it!" she said, laughing. "Cannot you tell me yourself what it says? No, it is nowhere." She came back to him again.

The interview had now become more difficult than ever. How could he possibly enter upon it? But he meant to go through with it nevertheless, and he sat in silence. Antonia thought he was still faint, and made him rest his head upon her shoulder.

"Ah!" she exclaimed suddenly, "I have it! I

took up a slip of paper, just folded up, which I saw on the table. There was no direction, was there?"

"Yes, I directed it in pencil. Well?"

"Well, it was dark when I came in, and I suppose I mistook it for some memoranda of my own that I thought were on the table, and used it to light the lamp." She felt in her pocket. "See, here is the piece of paper for which I mistook it. It was very careless of me, but you know how untidy I am," she said, smiling; "and it serves you right for writing to me on such shabby scraps of paper."

Was, then, some unseen power fighting on their behalf? Surely there was more than mere chance in this; it was at once an omen and a move in his favour. What could he do but yield, and surrender for the present his own will, which had been rendered so powerless? After all, a hundred accidents might happen. It would be mad and cruel to throw away the uncertainties in his favour that the future might have in store. If he broke with Antonia now, and if anything happened afterwards to break off his engagement with Grace, he would have made himself and the former miserable for nothing. He would subdue his own will, but he could not be expected to counteract the aid of circumstances. So he drew her still closer to him, and talked of anything but of that which he had come to say.

The next morning he inquired again at the Hôtel

de Pologne, but without result. The next day passed in like manner, and the next, until Maurice began to feel half anxious, half relieved. Meanwhile he saw Antonia as usual, and still the friendly powers seemed fighting for him. He did not, however, withdraw the letter, having made up his mind to do nothing, but to be guided by circumstances. At last so long a time passed that he thought of writing to Paris to make inquiries. On going to the hotel, however, he was told that a letter had been received from the landlord of an hotel at Erfurt announcing the arrival of a young English lady. The name, however, as it was written, was not necessarily Owen. Still, this made him determine to wait a day longer. The next morning he was informed that a Miss Owen had arrived the evening before, but unaccompanied. She had, however, asked for letters, and had taken possession of that which Maurice had left. He immediately sent up his card, and in a few minutes found himself in the presence of Grace herself.

She was very pale and worn, and looked very ill. But her fair calm beauty was of that order that cannot be destroyed, scarcely even by old age itself; for it depended upon faultless features, a faultless figure, the grace which springs from refinement, and the expression which comes only from goodness and purity. She was rather tall, and, in the stateliness and dignity of her sorrow, looked like

an empress dethroned. She was the beautiful Grace Owen still.

She held out her hand when she saw Maurice. He took it in both his own, and kissed it. When he looked into her face he saw that she was weeping. He led her to a seat, and sat down beside her, with her hand in his.

For some time it was impossible that either should speak. What was lying at the heart of each was far too deep to find expression.

"Dearest Grace," said Maurice at last, "what would I not have done to have been with you during that long journey!—I cannot bear to think of your having been all alone."

"My poor father!" she sobbed. Then, after the manner of strong natures, when, after all the agony of compulsory self-support in solitude, they at last meet with a heart on which to lean securely, she gave way in proportion to the strength of her courage.

Her father, it appeared, had died suddenly at Erfurt of disease of the heart. She had remained there till after he was buried, and had then come on to Dresden. It was the only course left open to her. Maurice remained with her nearly the whole of the day, but left her in the evening, promising to return on the morrow. Both needed to be alone after their meeting. She had not made any allusion to his letter to her father, but he knew

that she trusted him as much as he trusted her. If he himself alone were concerned, he would honestly have tried to thrust the image of Antonia from his heart, and endeavoured to live down his love; but then he was not concerned alone.

Work came to be rather at a standstill. While he had been happy in Antonia's friendship, Maurice had always painted in solitude. Now, however, since his mind had lost its ease, he could not work when alone; and when he did exert himself, it was in a feverish and nervous fashion. Antonia herself had become alarmed about him since his fainting fit. His restlessness, his loss of appetite, his worn and wearied expression, his fits of silence,—all told either of an overworked brain or some great anxiety. The latter, she thought, was impossible. Would he not have confided in her? But the former seemed probable in the extreme, and she did all she could to induce him to take some rest. Tibald also noticed his state, and told him in his plain-spoken way, that he was becoming a worse painter even than he was when he first came to Dresden. But Maurice persisted in declaring that nothing ailed him, and resented anything like blame being thrown upon his work, which was in itself a strange symptom in him, who had always been used to court the freest criticism; and though Antonia might easily have persuaded him to leave Dresden for a time, he could not do so on account of Grace. She proposed to

him many tours and excursions of which he had often talked with interest, reminding him how efficacious her advice had proved on a former occasion; but all to no purpose. To all about him he seemed to be in the first stage of a nervous illness produced by over-application to work, and many were already shaking their heads over the fate of the young artist, whose career had begun so brilliantly, only to end so soon. Antonia devoted herself to him as far as was possible, and did all she could think of to divert his thoughts.

When he was with Grace, however, his nervousness gave way to a strange, dull calmness. There was no want of attention to her, and no apparent loss of affection, but he acted towards her with a careful and minute attention to details rather than with the eager zeal of a lover, which sometimes overreaches its mark. Grace, however, trusted him implicitly; and, in fact, she could have found no real cause for complaint. If she perceived any change in him, she laid it to the effect of the two years' absence, and, when she saw that those two years seemed to have rendered him grave and worn, she had sufficient womanly vanity not to be doubtful as to the cause, and sufficient womanly cruelty not to be very sorry.

Then came long discussions as to plans. Of course no immediate marriage was possible, but still their marriage ought to take place as soon as

they could possibly afford it—as soon as Maurice should have received the first instalment of the pay for the public work on which he was engaged. Thus they would be obliged to wait some months. Meanwhile Grace went to live in a boarding-house, and was to spend her time in studying music professionally, for it would be necessary for the wife as well as the husband to work for their living for a long time to come.

Grace's musical ambition, however, was not lofty. She had a pure, light soprano voice of good quality, though with little power, which might, as she possessed talent and good musical instinct, enable her to become a good performer where there was not much space to be filled. Thus, with her skill as a pianist, which was already above the amateur standard, she would, in time, be able to take engagements as a teacher of music and as a concert singer. She was not well fitted for the stage by nature, even if her character, the associations of her life, and her own inclinations, had given her the least tendency in that direction.

With her present views, therefore, she became a pupil of the same eminent musician by whom Antonia had been trained. The latter had now become a most accomplished singer, and great things were expected of her on the lyric stage. She carefully avoided taking public engagements until she should make her regular *début*, and her

voice was known to those beyond her own very small circle only as the leading soprano in the choir of the Court Church. This engagement was of very great service to her, as she thus received that thoroughness and precision of knowledge which a practical acquaintance with the best ecclesiastical music alone can afford.

Miss Owen and Mademoiselle Salvi did not become more than the merest and most distant of acquaintances. Grace lived the most retired of lives, and her only opportunity of encountering Antonia was when they met by chance at the house of the Professor. She did not even hear Antonia's voice more than once or twice, for Grace was a good Protestant, and did not feel quite at her ease in attending Catholic services when she ought to be taking part in her own. She was a little shy and proud also among people she did not know, and was unable to fall at once into the ways of the artist-world. When she did happen to meet Antonia, the manner of the latter, made up as it was of extreme self-possession and impulsiveness, with no pretence at concealment of whatever thought or feeling was uppermost, rather offended her ideas of good taste and good breeding; while Antonia, on the other hand, while she admired the fair, calm beauty of Grace, and even felt, as women will, an undue consciousness of her own social inferiority, thought her cold and proud, and had, moreover, no great

respect for her as an artist. Antonia, too, led a very retired life, and knew, and wished to know, no one intimately but Edward Maurice.

The latter became by degrees to a certain extent used to the situation. He did not conceal from Grace the fact of his acquaintance with Antonia, nor from Antonia that of his intimacy with Grace. Circumstances seemed to have shown him a mode of settling matters by which he alone would be the sufferer. It was not to be supposed that Antonia would remain in Dresden long after her *début*. She was already in treaty with the Director of the opera at Vienna, and, if her first appearance at Dresden succeeded, she was pretty sure of being regularly engaged by him. Once embarked on the open voyage to fame, it was not likely that she and Maurice would see much of each other for some time, and the blow, when it fell, would be rendered slight, and, perhaps, altogether harmless. Art must at last, in a nature like hers, he thought, supply the place of love. No man or woman with brains can depend upon a mere simple passion for all interest in life. It was only the sudden and immediate blow that was to be avoided, and, after all, he should punish himself more than her. So he tried to reason himself out of his difficulty: but he knew neither his own heart nor hers.

CHAPTER X.

"Edward," said Grace one morning, "I want your advice. You know that the opera begins in a day or two. Well, I had a call to-day from Signor ——."

"What! does he want to engage you?"

"His offer was not a very complimentary one. It seems that it depends upon circumstances whether they open with 'Lucrezia' or with 'Norma.' If with 'Lucrezia,' it seems everything will go smoothly, but if not, they will want an Adalgisa."

"Haven't they got Louise Schöning?"

"It seems she is very ill."

"Then what is it they want you to do?"

"To learn the part of Adalgisa on the chance. The Director went in great distress to the Herr Professor, and he sent him on to me."

"Well, it seems to me a cool request. I should refuse."

"Well, I don't know. The Professor sent me a note advising me to accept, and making it rather a personal matter, and I mustn't disoblige him. To tell you the truth, I rather want to see what I can do."

"But you may not be wanted, after all."

"That, perhaps, is what tempts me."

"Let me see the note."

"My dear Pupil, — The Herr Director of the theatre, Signor Ricci, has called on me in great anxiety. He will himself explain the cause. I should strongly advise you to accept his offer, as I think you will find it a useful introduction to him, and if he sees you willing to oblige him, he will be able to do a great deal for you. Besides, it will be a good thing for you now to learn some music with a view to public performance, as you tell me that you must enter on your profession as soon as possible. If you intended yourself regularly for the stage, I should have advised you to decline the offer. But, as this is not so, you will, should you have to appear at all, find it a great advantage hereafter to have appeared in a theatre. I have also, I admit, selfish motives in urging my advice. You know how important it is that the Norma should be well supported in the duet, and as you also know that the Norma of the occasion is my own pupil, you can understand how exceedingly vexed I should be if anything went wrong. It might be fatal to her to fail at her *début*. Now, as you are at present the only one among my pupils whom I can thoroughly trust, you will confer a great kindness on me, as well as a benefit on yourself, by consenting. If you wish, I will talk to you about it, and I will take care myself that the engagement shall be profitable to you in every sense.

"I think I should advise you to take a name for the occasion.

"Hoping, my dear pupil, that you will accept Signor Ricci's offer, for the sake of all of us, I am, your most sincere friend,

"GUSTAV HENTZEL."

Maurice bit his lip. "I don't much like it," he said. The chance of Antonia and Grace singing together in 'Norma' was by no means pleasant to him. "But I suppose you must accept after that letter." This meant—"But Antonia must run no risk of failure."

"No—I don't see how I can help it."

"The Professor is complimentary to you after all. But are you as certain of yourself as he is of you?"

"I confess I am afraid. But I will go and see him, however."

She went out immediately, and Maurice, having seen her to the Professor's door, called on Antonia. He found her in good spirits, but not, as usual, at the piano. She was writing a letter.

"Why, what is this, Antonia?" he said. "I do not think I ever saw you letter-writing before."

"It is to my uncle at Leipzig. He must be here to see me come out."

"So it seems there is some doubt of their opening with 'Lucrezia'?"

"Is it not annoying?"

"But what is the difficulty?"

"It all depends upon whether la Waldmann—the contralto, you know—comes from Berlin in time. She is very uncertain, they say, and is always playing tricks."

"I shall be very sorry if you have to make your *début* in 'Norma.'"

"So shall I. I detest the opera."

"We must hope that la Waldmann will be good, then. But it seems there has been a misfortune about 'Norma'—Louise Schöning is very ill."

"My God! Why, there is no one else with whom I could sing. Who is there? Surely they are not going to put in the Varini? She would make me ridiculous."

"You will be surprised—they are negotiating with Miss Owen."

"What! Why, she has never sung on the stage. Varini would be better."

Maurice smiled. "Why, you talk like a *prima donna* of twenty years' standing."

She laughed also. "I am different from Mademoiselle Owen," she said. "I shall be nervous, of course, but nervousness like mine rather helps one. But suppose she broke down—or forgot her part—or—there might be a hundred accidents with her."

"I think not," said Maurice, gravely. There had been a bitterness in Antonia's tone in speaking of Grace which he did not like.

"And she is so cold and so proud," Antonia went on—"she will chill me, and not try to help me at all. Poor Louise! She has no ideas in her head, that is true; but then ideas are not wanted in the part, and she was so warm-hearted and so set upon my succeeding."

"Miss Owen will do her best for you, I am sure," said Maurice.

"The fact is, I don't like Miss Owen." She looked at Maurice, and saw that he was vexed. "Oh, forgive me," she said. "I always forget she is a countrywoman and friend of yours. Perhaps that is why I don't like her," she added, laughing, "so you ought not to be angry."

"I shall never be angry with you, Antonia."

"Well—why not? Well, then, I suppose I must do what I can with my sister-*débutante*. But does she know the music at all? We must practise together, and there is not much time now."

Chance seemed to have deserted Edward Maurice at last. He had, strange to say, forgotten how the engagement of Grace would bring her and Antonia together for some days. But it could not be helped now.

"I will go to the Professor at once," said Antonia. "Perhaps I may find the new Adalgisa there, and we can arrange matters together. Oh, how I hope that la Waldmann will come! Do you know any one who knows her?"

"No one who would have the least influence over her movements. They say that those depend entirely upon her poodle."

"Well, I must trust in fortune and the poodle, then. For I certainly don't trust in Mademoiselle Owen, although she is your friend. Come—will you walk with me?"

"I will see you to the door, and will then leave you to settle by yourselves."

On leaving Antonia at the Professor's door, he found another surprise. The day seemed crowded with them. But, this time, the surprise was pleasant. He met his friend Frank Lawson.

"Why, Frank, what in the name of all that is wonderful brings you to Dresden? I am delighted to see you, though."

"So we meet at last! After how long?"

"Nearly three years, I should say. But I should have known you anywhere. But what brings you?"

"*Ennui.* I have given up my idea of staying for ever in Rome, and have taken to vagabondage. I have been at Venice and Vienna and Munich. Of course, therefore, I could not help coming on here to see what you are doing. But I forget. Am I to congratulate you? Ought I to ask after Mademoiselle Owen or Madame Maurice?"

"Grace is still Miss Owen."

"You seem to take matters very slowly. But

then, I suppose, you have become more than half German by this time."

Maurice told him of the death of Grace's father, and her present plans. "And now you must come and dine with me," he said. "How strange it seems to find you in Dresden! Have you been here long?"

"Two hours. I am at the Hôtel de Pologne."

"Well, I suppose you are not off in a hurry? Any way I can put you up at my place."

"Why, we shall have Newman Street again, *à la mode allemande.* By all means. No, I am not off for a day or two. Do you know, I am intrusted with a mission of public importance?"

"I should not have guessed it, certainly."

"Well, it is a long story. When I was in Florence I got to know, rather intimately, the director of the opera at Vienna—he was in the same hotel, and was a very good fellow. I called on him when I went to Vienna the other day, and told him I was bound for Dresden, so he asked me to go to the theatre on the first opera night and notice a certain singer whose name is unknown to fame—I have it written down, but I think it is Salvi—and see whether she was a success as far as applause went, and all that sort of thing. He said he didn't want any of my criticism—complimentary, was it not?—but only facts, and asked me to send the latter to him at once."

Here was another chance in Maurice's favour.

It would be strange if he could not get his friend to send a good account of Antonia to Vienna. "She will do," he said. "Do you remember some far back letters of mine in which I weaved, as you said, a romance out of nothing?"

"What? the invisible nightingale?"

"Yes. That is Mademoiselle Salvi. If I am not mistaken she will turn out the greatest singer in Europe."

"By Jove! then it was a romance after all. Do you still keep up the acquaintance?"

"I know her very well—intimately, in fact. I must introduce you."

"I shall be delighted."

"After dinner we will go and see Grace. She often talks of you."

"I am glad she has not quite forgotten me. It has always been rather on my conscience that I couldn't manage to see them to Dresden, and, now you have told me the story of their journey, I am grieved indeed. However, I suppose she understood the reason."

"I took care that she should."

"How very oddly things come about! Who would ever have thought, less than a year ago, that I, Frank Lawson, who was never going to leave Italy again, should ever hear the rich Miss Owen, living luxuriously in London, sing a second-rate part in a Dresden theatre?"

"Or that I, the hard-up Edward Maurice, should become richer than Richard Owen himself? But come, I am getting hungry."

The first opera night at the theatre now began to draw very near indeed. It was tolerably certain that the season would open with 'Lucrezia Borgia,' with Antonia as Lucrezia, and a certain celebrated contralto from the opera at Berlin as Maffio Orsini, and it was so announced officially. But the contralto, being extremely popular, was correspondingly capricious, and the manager kept 'Norma,' in which there is no contralto part, as a reserve in case of disappointment. Grace, although very little expecting to be called upon, studied her part energetically, and was zealously helped both by the Professor and by Antonia, who was too anxious about herself not to take all the pains she could with Grace. It is to be feared, however, that poor Grace did not find her hours of practice and rehearsal very pleasant. She could not overcome her shyness under such unwonted circumstances, and Antonia's almost violent energy and impatient quickness, which made no allowance for the slowness of others, rather frightened her. Antonia was a woman who could never much like or be liked by other women; and, without knowing why, had taken a particular dislike to Grace Owen—a dislike which she was hardly at the pains to hide. There was certainly no room for Maurice's fear that there would be confidences between the two.

At last good news arrived—Mademoiselle Waldmann, the great contralto, was actually in the town. Grace gave up her practice with intense relief, Edward Maurice was delighted, Antonia full of joy. 'Lucrezia Borgia' was put at once into rehearsal.

Now Signor and Signora Salvi returned at last from Leipzig, and embraced their niece with genuine pride and affection, although they had neglected her for so many months. That was their way. They were quite unchanged — they came to Dresden without any luggage except a placid smile and half a cigar. They were glad to see Maurice, but the violinist evidently considered that the good prospects of his niece were entirely owing to himself.

At length the last rehearsal was over, and on the very next day Antonia was to make her first appearance on the stage. It was arranged that she was to be left entirely to herself, and was to see no one, not even Maurice himself, during the whole day—she herself desired this—and was to be taken to the house in the evening by her aunt. Maurice, Lawson, Grace, and an English lady of their acquaintance, were to occupy a box together, the two former arranging to meet the two ladies at the theatre itself.

There were at least two persons in Dresden who slept badly that night. The sleeplessness of Antonia was caused by natural and healthy excitement, but that of Maurice by a deeper cause. To-

morrow night must, in all probability, separate him from Antonia for ever.

Was it even now too late to break with Grace? Was it even now too late to save her from the fate of marrying one who loved her not—himself from treachery to nature, to the woman to whom he owed everything, whom he loved? Was it even now too late to confer happiness upon at least two persons out of three—to save three from misery? With these questions, in one form or another, his brain was racked all night, and ever with the same answer, It is too late!

But morning came at last. Grace went to spend the day with Mrs Ford. Antonia shut herself up in her room, would not see or speak to any one, and even took her meals in solitude. Signor Salvi smoked up and down the Terrace nearly all day. The Signora ate, drank, slept, and smiled. The Professor taught even his most interesting pupils in rather an absent manner, and took much snuff. Mademoiselle Waldmann held a kind of levee all day at the Hôtel de Pologne. Maurice went to his studio, and Lawson accompanied him, but no work was done there. After dinner they smoked a cigar and went to the theatre.

On entering, the house was full—their own box alone was empty. Neither Mrs Ford nor Grace was there, though it was late. But the following printed notice was lying on the ledge:—

"In consequence of the sudden, though not serious, indisposition of Mademoiselle Waldmann, Signor Bellini's opera of 'Norma' will be performed this evening instead of that which was announced.

"Pollio,	. . . .	Herr SCHWARZ;
Oroveso,	. . . .	Herr BAUER;
Flavio,	. . . .	Sig. LUIGI;
Clotilda,	. . . .	Mde. HEGEL;
Adalgisa	. . . .	Mdlle. GRAZIA;
	and	
Norma,	. . . .	Mdlle. SALVI."

CHAPTER XI.

Lawson made a grimace and shrugged his shoulders. Maurice frowned, folded his arms, and leaned resolutely forward. He thought of the story of the opera he was going to hear, and felt as though Fate were amusing itself at his expense, even if he had nothing really to fear.

The overture was soon over, and the curtain rose upon the not very magnificent scenery which represented the sacred grove. Then came the chorus of Druids, which every one who ever heard a barrel organ knows. It was well done, and the voice of Herr Bauer told well; but the audience was cold—the inevitable result of a change of programme—and they missed their favourite, the Waldmann, who could not contrive to lose her popularity in

spite of the contemptuous and capricious behaviour towards her admirers for which she was notorious. The familiar notes, therefore, called forth but little applause. The long *scena* between the two tenors which followed the chorus, in which the feeble-minded pro-consul tells his friend the story of his love for Adalgisa and his faithlessness to Norma, was worse received still, for Herr Schwarz was deservedly no favourite. When the *scena* ended, the irritation of the house was so obviously on the increase, that Maurice threw himself back in a state of despair, and Lawson was already making up his mind that he should have to send to Vienna the fatal word, "*Fiasco.*" Then the march sounded, and the chief priest, the Druids, and the warriors entered upon the stage in procession, and heralded in chorus the approach of Norma herself.

Antonia Salvi came forward at last, slowly, calmly, serenely. Her loose robes suited well the dignity of her carriage, and she looked every inch the inspired priestess. But she was not the traditional Norma, nevertheless—there was something wild and incomplete about her. All the musical part of Dresden had been anxious to hear her for months, and had made up its mind to welcome her enthusiastically; but the temper of the house had become so bitterly cold, that, though there was a slight attempt to applaud her entrance —an attempt which she barely acknowledged by

the slightest of bows—she proceeded to the altar in silence.

For some instants she stood motionless, with her eyes fixed on the ground. Then raising them, and stretching aloft the golden sickle, she began to sing.

That magnificent voice! The coldness thawed in a moment before its divine secret—the secret of finding the straight road, in spite of every barrier of circumstance, to the very inmost heart of every man at once. Intellect has it not—culture cannot produce it: it is the golden harp, which is bestowed by the hand of nature alone. In less than a minute all in the house were in sympathy with the singer, and not only with her, but with each other also. From the moment that she opened her lips there was no doubt of her success. Maurice leaned back with a sigh of relief, Lawson leaned forward with an expression of interest.

It was, perhaps, not altogether unfortunate that 'Antonia' had to make her first appearance in an opera like 'Norma.' If the music had belonged to a higher class, the critical German audience would very likely have found her interpretation different from some special standard, and so, after the first enthusiasm, have taken to fault-finding, out of pure revenge for having been carried away; but as it was, there was nothing to distract attention from the singer herself, so that, without having to give up a single prejudice, every one present was able,

with a good critical conscience, to yield himself to her sway.

"*Casta Diva*"—or rather Antonia's execution, which was faultless—was applauded rapturously, and she retired from the stage laden with bouquets. It was already a success of enthusiasm.

Then Grace Owen entered. But she was painfully nervous; and the more so as she had been so unexpectedly called upon to take the part, at the last moment, after she had been led to consider herself safe, so that the few bars which she had to sing by herself were scarcely audible. Had she appeared before Antonia's entrance, she would probably have been greeted with something worse than silence; but the *prima donna* had put the house into a good humour, and the youth and beauty of Grace gained her even a little applause. This encouraged her; and, in her duet with the unpopular tenor, she acquitted herself better, though her heart did not cease to tremble. Maurice tried to catch her eye, but she was in that state known to all who appear before an audience for the first time, whether as actors or orators—she saw nothing whatever, and heard no sound but that of her own voice—the most fearful sound for a nervous person to hear.

The comparative failure of the duet made Antonia's return to the stage the more welcome. This time her appearance was warmly cheered,

and now came the first duet between herself and Grace.

The latter was more nervous now than ever. She felt more than half inclined to follow the example of the Waldmann, and cry off at the last moment, reckless of consequences. But the first words of Antonia's recitative—

> "T'inoltra, O giovinetta!
> T'inoltra—e perche tremi?"

"Approach, O maiden; why dost thou tremble?" were uttered intentionally in a tone so kind and full of encouragement, that she looked up, and felt drawn to Antonia as she had never felt before. The fascination of triumphant Art was now pervading every spot where Antonia stood. Grace herself felt it, and, forgetting the audience, became conscious only that she was about to sing with Antonia. With such support how could she fear? Then she even let her eyes leave the stage, and saw her friends. So she took courage, and did her best—and her best was very fair indeed.

Then came the trio, which ends the first act, and then—for there was scope for a display of passion in it—Antonia let herself out, and sang and acted with her whole power. Dresden had never heard anything like it before, and the most gentle of composers would have been astonished to find so much in his own music. Her rage, her contempt

were almost terrible. When she concluded, all was silent for an instant—and then burst forth a storm of applause such as had not been heard in the house within living memory. Antonia was recalled over and over again to be applauded. It was no longer only a great success—it was a triumph.

Maurice and Lawson hastened, when the curtain fell, to the room where the performers were waiting between the acts. Antonia and Grace were both there. Maurice hastily pressed the hand of the former, reflecting in his own face all the joy, the triumph, the love, that shone in hers. He forgot, for the time, the existence of the whole world save that of Antonia and of himself. On recollecting himself he went to the side of Grace, leaving Lawson talking to Antonia. The two latter spoke in Italian.

"What a triumph, Mademoiselle!" said Lawson. "You have gained the first of your ten thousand. It will be my greatest boast all my life that I assisted at the first appearance of the divine Antonia Salvi."

"Ah, it is clear that you have lived in Italy," she said, laughing. "That is the way we Italians talk, but we do not always mean what we say."

"You will soon find, I hope, that my admiration is sincere. Honestly, I cannot say too much."

"Signor, I am proud to have your approval. I wish I could have asked for it in some better part."

"You prevented my thinking of the part, Mademoiselle."

"You are a great friend of Signor Maurice, are you not?"

"Most intimate. We lived together for some years before he came to Dresden."

"So I have heard. He has often spoken of you. Do you know Mademoiselle Owen, also?"

"Very well, and like her better than I know her. She didn't do so badly to-night. I was afraid she would be more nervous."

"No; she did very well indeed, and she is a beautiful girl. She would look a better Norma than any of us, I think—I am quite jealous of being eclipsed by Adalgisa—that is against all rule," she added, with a laugh.

"You are doing yourself the grossest injustice, Mademoiselle—you are eclipsed by none. But you are right in one thing—she is very beautiful."

"I believe she is very amiable also; but I have not seen much of her."

"She is very amiable."

"She and Signor Maurice are very old acquaintances, it seems."

"They did not know each other very long before their engagement, but that has been rather a long one—more than three years. However, I suppose we shall soon be asked to the wedding now."

Antonia's face was one that by its changes of ex-

pression betrayed the slightest and most transient emotion; but now, the smile did not even leave her lips—she did not show by the quivering of a nerve that the life of her life was destroyed.

"I suppose so," she answered, calmly: and that was all.

Maurice came up. "Come, Frank," he said, "we must get back to our box unless we want to miss Mademoiselle Salvi's next scene. Antonia," he whispered to her, "I shall see you again this evening."

She bent her head, but did not answer, and he and Lawson went back to their places in the theatre.

The curtain rose again for the second act, on the scene where Norma is about to murder her sleeping children. There was a settled, hard energy about her delivery of the passage which was almost unpleasant—her voice seemed, in its over-intensity, to have lost half its music, and there was apparent effort. In reality she sang mechanically, and as if asleep. Still, however, the peculiarity of her style was not inappropriate to the situation.

When, however, Grace entered, no longer nervous, but filled with courage drawn from the approving words of Maurice, to join her in the great duet, the hard dream passed away. The strange similarity of her own position to that of the deserted priestess came with a cold, piercing rush of reality into her

soul. All her vehement nature, like a dying flame, flared up in an unnatural glow. There, not on the stage, but in the box before her, was the faithless foreigner who had amused himself with her and deceived her—her, who now recognised herself and her genius, who was conscious at last of her own greatness,—conscious, although her consciousness of it meant not pride, but despair—and there, smiling beside her, she stood who had really held his heart —a true Adalgisa, pretty and tame and weak—fit consort for such a lover. She scorned them both. Now the world should know her, and Maurice should know her too, even as she knew herself. In a whirl of emotions, strained to their utmost and uniting in a single turning-point in her bursting heart—in a storm of love, hate, jealousy, and despair—she hurried through the few bars of recitative, and then, with an almost superhuman effort, she threw all that storm, all herself, into the air. Rapidly, energetically, recklessly—almost desperately, she poured forth the notes, with the whole power of her voice, in a style of which the composer had certainly never dreamed. Grace found it impossible to follow her. It was no longer a duet. Still, the effect was grand in the extreme. Her voice rang out clearly in a grand burst of desperate triumph—it was no longer a song of tender, womanly sentiment, it had no reference to the words of the librettist, none to the idea of the composer—it was

the real agony of living human nature rebelling against the feeble fetters of conventional art—a war of passion and destiny. It was all hopelessly, utterly wrong, but there was no help for it—the applause must come. And again it did come, in a storm of cheering and a torrent of flowers. In the midst of it all stood Antonia, deaf and blind. A sharp spasm came over her face—she placed her hand to her left side, and fell on the stage.

Grace sprang to her side with a scream, and she was at once carried to the dressing-room. Maurice and Lawson followed, and found her lying on a sofa surrounded by many persons—the Director of the theatre, the Professor, her uncle and aunt—all, in short, who could find room. A surgeon, who had been among the audience, was passing his hand over her heart. Her wreath of oak leaves had fallen off, and her long black hair floated down to the ground. Her hands were tightly clenched, and her face still wore an expression of pain. All were silent.

Maurice fell on his knees by her side, and, grasping one of her heavy, passive hands, recklessly poured forth all the passionate expression of such intense love as can only be inspired by such women as she. Grace, who stood by, terrified and faint—all who stood around—were invisible to him; he saw only her whom he loved with all his soul.

But his words were too late. Antonia was dead, and Grace Owen's engagement at an end for ever.

THE RAID OF ARNABOLL:

A TALE OF THE BYGONE YEAR.

BY THE LATE PROFESSOR AYTOUN.

[*MAGA.* AUGUST 1851.]

CHAPTER I.

ONE day about the beginning of August last, I was sauntering along Princes Street in anything but a cheerful mood of mind. The truth is, that I did not very well know what to make of myself for the next two months. I was exceedingly anxious to be off to the moors as usual; but I had no spare cash to rent one, and no grouse-shooter of my acquaintance had been thoughtful enough to make tender of his hospitalities. To expend the whole season in Edinburgh was clearly out of the question. True—I might shut myself up in my rooms, post a notice outside the door that I would be back in time for the box-day, and devote the interval to the completion of an historical romance which I had commenced eighteen months before,

and conducted as far as the single combat in the middle of the second volume, where I stuck for want of incidents. But not even Sir Walter could have submitted to such a penance at such a time; and, besides, I was not at all assured that any publisher would adequately recompense me for my trouble. I began to ponder upon the respective merits of different watering-places, principally on the west coast, "with angling at an easy distance, and every convenience for bathing at hand;" but these cogitations summoned up no more cheerful visions than the reminiscence of a row of unpicturesque two-storeyed houses, fronting the sea, in which certain Glaswegian nereids, in long night-gowns, were perpetually floundering—of a hard truckle-bed with clammy sheets—of iron-pronged forks, and of marvellously ill-flavoured mutton. It will, therefore, be easy to comprehend why I glared malignantly at the travelling carriages, as each, with its appropriate load of luggage, drove away from the doors of the hotels, conveying some delighted party to their residence in the far Highlands. There are certain moments in every man's life, when he succumbs to the original sin of radicalism.

There were not many men in town. On the previous week the Toxophilites had departed, relieving the streets of Edinburgh from the unwonted ravages of Robin Hood and his merry men, attired with classical propriety in a sort of spurious tartan.

To them had succeeded the philosophers, who were now occupied as usual with their everlasting discussions about the action of icebergs and glaciers, boulder-stones, striated rocks, and the antiquity of the sea-levels. I, being supremely indifferent to such matters, and infinitely preferring a grouse to a pterodactyle, or a cut of fresh salmon to a section of a petrified ichthyosaurus, had hitherto abstained altogether from participating in, or listening to, the controversy; and in all human probability should never have attended a single meeting of the British Association, but for the following incident.

In the course of my walk I happened to encounter Anthony Whaup, who, being of a naval turn of mind, professed to feel a deep interest in the law of storms, and was accordingly in daily attendance at the meteorological section.

"The very man I was looking for!" said Anthony. "I say—don't you remember three or four years ago, at Cork, meeting a very pleasant fellow, a Captain Stanley, who was quartered there?"

"To be sure I do. He was by far the most agreeable member of the mess, and might have sat for his portrait to Lever. But what of him?"

"Why, I am strongly of opinion that he is in Edinburgh at this present moment."

"I am very glad to hear it. Do you know where he puts up? We must try to get one or two good fellows together, and give him a dinner at Granton."

"If he be the man I take him for," said Anthony mysteriously, "that sort of entertainment will hardly suit him."

"What do you mean, Anthony?"

"Simply this—that, unless I am altogether mistaken as to the identity of the individual, your conversation would be somewhat too frivolous for his taste, judging from his present pursuits. Where do you think I saw him?"

"How should I know? Possibly in a billiard-room, or not at all improbably eating ices at Stewart's."

"Nothing of the kind. I left him delivering a lecture on the centrifugal qualities of light at the British Association."

"Why, you must be mad, Anthony! The thing is perfectly impossible. Stanley knows as much about science as I do of the Chinese alphabet!"

"I certainly should not have conceived that his range was remarkably wide," replied Anthony. "Nevertheless I repeat, that if Stanley is in life, I saw him lecturing not half an hour ago. He did it remarkably well, too, judging from the interest which the ladies took in the discourse; and no wonder, for he contrived to mix up science and compliments in a way which was positively astounding. After all, who knows but that we may have seen only the physical side of him at Cork? He may be a second edition of the Admirable Crichton!"

"So may you, for that matter, Anthony; but I take leave to doubt it. Did you hear his name mentioned?"

"No—and that is what puzzles me. There is no such an entry as Captain Stanley in the list."

"Then depend upon it you are entirely wrong. You must have been misled by some strong resemblance."

"I shall believe that," quoth Anthony, "when it is demonstratively proved to me that mankind is like a bushel of peas. I tell you that I knew him at the first glance, though he has shaved off his moustache. But you may easily satisfy yourself, by becoming a member of the Association. You will be sure to see him the day after to-morrow, when we expect to have a most interesting discussion. I shall probably read a paper on the theory of the rudder, illustrated by diagrams."

"Thank you!" said I. And we parted.

On the following morning, I was giving my setter an airing on the Pentlands. The poor beast seemed to think the period for the exercise of his talents was approaching, for he raced away at full speed through the furze, made long semicircles on the face of the hill, and finally returning to my feet, rolled himself over and over again on the dewy grass in an agony of animal delight. I should think meanly of the man who could complain of solitude, if allowed the company of his dog. Yes,

Sweep! I know several bipeds in breeches who are idiots compared with thee!"

Rounding the shoulder of a hill, I came suddenly upon a group whom I knew to be *savants* and geologists. They were almost all foreigners, and one old gentleman, who spoke a language that I presumed to be Dutch, was pointing, with great enthusiasm, to certain marks on the surface of a stone by the roadside, which seemed to have been inflicted by a pickaxe. I was about to pass on, when my eye was riveted by the sight of a figure a little way apart from the others. Apparently he took no vivid interest in the investigation, whatever it might be, for he was smoking a cigar, with an exceeding *distrait* air, and practising the sword exercise with a small chipping-hammer. I felt assured that Anthony was in the right.

"Captain Stanley!" said I.

"Ha! Hush, hush, my dear fellow!" cried he, starting up. "Don't mention my name here, if you please! These men don't know me—at least they don't know who I am. Not a word about the army, or I am ruined! Well, Dr Zunder, what have you discovered?"

"*Dass ist merkwurdig!*" said one of the geologists who now approached. "*Mann sieht hier gewiss die gletscherstreiche.*"

"*Potz tausend! nein,*" exclaimed another, "*die sint eisbergische kiesel!*" and a perfect Babel of

tongues arose in support of either theory. So keen was the encounter that Stanley had time to say—

"Excuse me for the present; there is a mystery in this which I shall clear up shortly. Call for me this evening at nine, at Douglas's Hotel, and you shall know more. Ask for Mr Larkins."

I took the hint, and made off, leaving the scientific Larkins to excite or calm the dispute as appeared best to himself. It is strange what pleasure all of us attach to mystery. Listless as I had felt that morning, I was now as excited as the third conspirator in a melodrama. Here was a real *bonâ fide* romance, or something decidedly like one, enacting before my very eyes, for a sight of which G. P. R. James would have given a trifle. It was evident that no vulgar cause, no mean occasion, no wretched embarrassments of debt could have transformed the dashing dragoon into a *savant*, or caused him to conceal the hereditary splendour of his name. I burned with anxiety to become the depository of the promised secret.

At nine o'clock punctually I kept my appointment. The waiter ushered me into a handsome parlour, where I found the philosopher, in a flowered dressing-gown and slippers, stretched upon the sofa, looking the very reverse of a pupil of Buckland or Agassiz.

"Ah, Cameron, my dear friend! delighted to see you!" cried he, elevating himself on his elbow.

"Waiter! bring up the tray with the lobster and iced champagne, and then make yourself scarce as soon as possible. And how have you been for this long time? 'Gad, I hardly knew you when you plumped upon us this morning like a hawk on a brood of wild-ducks!"

"You were certainly not more astonished than I was. Our old friend Whaup told me that he had recognised you at the Association, but I thought he must have been dreaming."

"So!—Whaup knew me then?" said Stanley, evidently a little put out. "That may be awkward if it goes further. Do you think he is likely to peach?"

"Why, no—especially if you have no acquaintance here in common. He only mentioned it to me as a singular circumstance."

"Ah, well! You must manage to make him believe he was mistaken. I would not for a thousand pounds that it were generally known who I am."

"In which capacity? Stanley or Larkins?"

"Oh, as Stanley, to be sure! Larkins can answer for himself; and I am glad to observe from the newspapers that he is making such a sensation in the learned circles. I vow to you that I would as soon have thought of appearing in the character of a field-preacher!"

"But, Stanley, what does all this mean? I

own to you that I was never so thoroughly puzzled in my life."

"So much the better. The confession does credit to your candour, and infinite honour to my ingenuity. Help yourself to a glass of champagne, and I shall tell you the whole story. You take me for a philosopher, doubtless?"

"Of course I do."

"Then, for your comfort be it known to you, that if the waiter who showed you in is not better acquainted with natural philosophy than I am, he is a disgrace to your enlightened city."

"But you read a paper yesterday, at the Association?"

"To be sure I did; and devilish hard work it was too! A duller affair than it was, before I inserted the elegant allusions to the ladies, never emerged from a cloister; and even my impudence, which is supposed to be tolerably developed, hardly sufficed to carry me through the string of polysyllables with which the learned author had chosen to garnish his discourse."

"Is it possible," said I, "that you attempted to palm upon the British Association, adorned as it is with the eminent names of Brewster and others, a paper which was not your own?"

"By no manner of means," replied Stanley, coolly lighting a cigar. "It was mine, in virtue of twenty

guineas which I paid for it; and it strikes me that it was a confoundedly dear bargain."

I suppose that my countenance must have betrayed my astonishment at this unblushing avowal of unparalleled imposture, for Stanley threw himself back upon the sofa in a convulsion of laughter.

"Do forgive me, Cameron!" he said at last; "but I really could not help it! You looked as woe-begone as a priest receiving a confession of murder."

"I do not know what you may think of it, Captain Stanley," I replied, "but I own this does appear to me to pass the limits of a jest. What conceivable object you could have in passing yourself off to the most eminent men of Europe as one of their own body——"

"Is precisely the very thing I intend to tell you, if you will only have a little patience," said the fictitious Larkins. "You may be sure I did not run the risk without a strong motive. In brief, then, I am in love."

"And, pray, what has love to do with the meetings of the British Association?"

"Oh, far more than you think. It is a vulgar error to suppose that Cupid has any abstract objection to spectacles. But I see I must relate my whole story. Last winter we were quartered at Bolton, as disgusting a manufacturing place as you ever happened to see—full of chimney-stalks,

factories, and all manner of abominations, but sanctified henceforward in my imagination as the birthplace of Lucy Hawkins—a very handsome and a very delightful girl, I assure you. Her father is a great millowner; and Lucy, his only child, was educated in London, and returned to the parental home, like a lily transplanted to a—to a——"

"To a barrack-yard?" I suggested, observing that the gallant captain halted somewhat in his simile.

"Not exactly," said Stanley; "however, let that pass. I saw her, and fell in love with her. Upon my honour, Cameron, my affection was as disinterested as that of any poor devil of a younger brother can be. I liked her well enough to have married her, before I knew anything about her prospects; and if I liked her still better afterwards, surely there was no harm in that?"

"None in the world," said I. "In short, you were a disinterested dragoon."

"I claim no merit for being so," said Stanley, modestly; "as I am sure you will acknowledge when you see Lucy. Well, I seized every opportunity of meeting her, which occurred the more often as she visited at several houses in the neighbourhood to which I had introductions; made love to her in my own fashion; and at length was fortunate enough to discover that I was not altogether an object of indifference. But still there

were objections. Lucy frankly told me that my intellect was hardly enough cultivated to enable me to aspire to more than her esteem. Between ourselves, Cameron, she is a good deal of a blue!"

"The devil she is!"

"I am sorry to acknowledge the fact, but it is undeniable. Probably it was the fault of her education. Those infernal chemists, geologists, and mesmerists are the curse of the present generation; and a plain fellow like myself, who stuck at the second aorist, and never crossed the *pons asinorum*, has no chance if he cannot patter their jargon. For my part I wish they were all banished to Siberia! That, however, might have been got over; but her father, when he learned what was going on, behaved like a positive brute. Would you believe it, Cameron? he had the insolence to swear that no locust of a tax-eater, as he politely chooses to designate the gentlemen who bear her Majesty's commission, should ever enter his family; and, in short, there was a regular blow-up."

"And what followed?"

"The usual thing. I was determined not to give up Lucy, and Lucy's inclination towards me was naturally increased by her father's opposition. We corresponded. I ventured to describe the charming nature of the scenery in the neighbourhood of Gretna Green, with a view to induce Lucy to visit that enchanting retreat; but she was as obstinate

as the Duke of Wellington in reply to an application for further leave of absence. She declared, moreover, that she would never marry me, even with her father's consent, unless I won a name either in literature or science, which, in my case, seemed as hopeless a task as though she had required me to ascend to the top of the Himalaya Mountains. I tried to convince her that such pursuits were utterly incompatible with my profession; whereupon she desired me to achieve fame under any name I chose; but that, unless I achieved it, I must give up hopes of her for ever."

"I begin now to see my way. That accounts for Larkins?"

"Partially. Hearing of this scientific meeting, as they call it, I got an old schoolfellow of mine—an Oxford man—who is rather out at elbows, to write a paper upon some out-of-the-way subject; came down here; enrolled myself as a member; and actually read it! I should tell you, though, that I knew Lucy was to be here. Her father, who is now, by purchase, a Highland proprietor, is to arrive in Edinburgh to-morrow or next day: Lucy took advantage of a friend's invitation to be a witness of my scientific *début*."

"How did you acquit yourself under these trying circumstances?"

"Decently, I think—the papers say admirably. I went at it as I would go at a five-bar gate, for

I knew that it was neck-or-nothing. You can't conceive the agony I have been in for this last week! All sorts of fellows, foreign and domestic, fancy me a prodigy of learning; and I have actually been asked to state my opinion as to the probable origin of the moon!"

"Did you do it?"

"My better angel prevented me from committing myself to the green-cheese hypothesis! But seriously, Cameron, my meeting with you is the most fortunate accident of my life. If you do not help me now, all that I have gone through is worse than labour lost."

"Tell me how I can assist you. But at present it baffles my comprehension to understand how I can be of the slightest use."

"Touch the bell, like a good fellow, will you? We shall talk this matter over a glass of cold brandy-and-water. You see old Hawkins—Macduff Hawkins as he calls himself, in right of his grandmother—is going north presently to take possession of a Highland property which he has just purchased. Free Trade knocked the last proprietor on the head. Well, sir, it is indispensable for my plans that some one should accompany him thither; and you are the identical individual whom I wish to enlist in the service."

"My dear Stanley! what can I do?"

"Everything. In the first place, you will have

sublime shooting—for so they tell me—and as much liquor as you can set your face to. In the second place, you will go along with Lucy, which is a privilege that I would not accord to every one. In the third place, I want you to be there, for, unless you are, the whole of my scheme will miscarry."

"But you forget—I never saw this Mr Macduff Hawkins!"

"That is no obstacle, if you will be guided by me. To-morrow you shall enrol yourself as a member of the British Association. On the next day you shall read a statistical paper in one of the sections. Hawkins will be there; and if you act according to my suggestions, you will not only gain immortal renown, but have a couple of months' stupendous fun, and eternally oblige your humble servant into the bargain."

I need hardly detail the rest of our conversation. My weakness, from boyhood, has always been a yielding to the impulses of eccentricity, and before the gallant captain and I parted that evening, he entirely succeeded in gaining me over. On explanation, it turned out that he and half-a-dozen of his friends had taken an extensive shooting in the vicinity of the estate which Mr Macduff Hawkins had purchased, in the remotest part of Ross-shire, and that they intended perpetrating a jest, for the sake of Stanley, which I could not but acknowledge as singularly facetious, provided it could be put

into execution. What remorse of conscience I felt in becoming a party to the conspiracy—for such it undoubtedly was—was partly stifled by the consideration that everything is fair in love; partly by the assurance that old Hawkins was a thorough democrat and Free-Trader, a representation which made me feel the less compunction for aiding and abetting in any scheme which might defeat his declared intention of marrying his daughter to a notorious bill-broker, who was supposed to have an eye to Parliament; partly by a natural and national disgust that a millowner, who had been party to the intrigues which have resulted in the ruin of many of our old Scottish families, should take advantage of that political error by superseding an ancient and an honoured name; and partly by the mixture of flattery and fluids which the Captain adroitly administered. I can understand a man offering resistance to the single, but not to the combined influence. Besides, I liked Stanley, who was, in reality, as fine a fellow as ever mounted epaulettes; and before I left him, I had entered heart and soul into the business; and was as ready to aid him in carrying off his ladye-love, as though he had been a Christian Spanish knight, old Hawkins an unbelieving Moor, his daughter a Xara or Xariffa, with a secret hankering for baptism, and I myself a Palmer, sworn to do my utmost towards assisting all secessions from Heathenesse.

CHAPTER II.

When you step into a shower-bath, it is the wisest course to pull the string immediately. If you hesitate, imagination, which is rather a cowardly faculty, rushes upon you with a whole army of horrors, magnifying the passing shower to the dimensions of a perfect deluge; whereas, by adopting the contrary method, the shock is over in an instant.

Acting upon this principle, I lost no time in preparing my paper for the Association. I flatter myself that it was a remarkably good one. I selected for my subject the intemperate habits of the people; and by referring to the revenue returns, and the tables of excise, I procured a tolerably accurate account of the number of gallons of every kind of liquor annually distilled and consumed. To divide the ascertained quantity among the population as given by the last census, was a simple calculation, and the result was harrowing in the extreme. Next I proceeded to calculate the outlay which was occasioned thereby, and announced the startling proposition, that if no fluid of any kind except water should be consumed within this or any other country, the savings of the people would be very materially augmented. I blinked, of course, the revenue question altogether, for there really was

no call upon me to assist Sir Charles Wood by contributing the materials for a budget; and I said nothing whatever regarding the future prospects of the brewers. Papers of this kind are very valuable. Take, for example, the article of tobacco—divide the quantity imported among the existing population, and you have no idea what an immense deal of precocious depravity will be evolved. The result will show that even children under five years of age smoke pigtail and snuff macabaa, with a perseverance which is truly bewildering. Even the ladies are accused of contributing to the revenue by the consumption of the narcotic weed.

I took care to infuse the proper proportion of pathos into the peroration, which was composed in a melancholy and martyrlike tone, with long-drawn cadences suggestive of the fruitless struggles of the writer against the surrounding tide of indifference and iniquity. I was very well received by my audience. Several ladies were observed to have recourse to their handkerchiefs; and one stout, pudgy, bald-headed individual, who sate on a bench immediately in front of me, honoured my remarks with a series of approving bows, which might have done honour to a Chinese mandarin. When the *séance* was over, he requested the honour of an introduction to the gifted lecturer, and I presently found myself engaged in conversation with Mr Macduff Hawkins.

Profiting by the opportunity, I offered my services as a cicerone, in case Mr Hawkins should desire to inspect any of the objects of interest in the city, among which I casually mentioned Queen Mary's apartments at Holyrood, Moray House, and the Regalia; but I was instantly apprised of my error.

"No, no! none of that rubbish for me, young gentleman!" said Mr Hawkins. "What good can any one get from looking at a parcel of fusty rooms, or a few trashy pebbles exhibited in a glass-case? Thank heaven! there is no nonsense of romance about me—I like to stick to realities."

"I ask your pardon, Mr Hawkins——"

"Macduff Hawkins, if you please. I am not in the least ashamed of my name. Believe it has been rather creditably known in this part of the world, even before you or I were born—eh?"

"Unquestionably," I replied. "The name you bear is dear to the heart of every Scotsman. We have not forgotten the stroke that freed us from the thraldom of Macbeth, nor the privileges of the clan Macduff."

"Upon my word, sir, I am infinitely delighted to hear you say so. I always liked the Scotch people. They are thrifty, shrewd, and industrious; though, as you very properly remarked, too much addicted to the use of ardent spirits. After all, I think we may as well have a look at the Regalia. Are they very old?"

"The diadem," said I, with a slight, but I hope pardonable, deviation from historical fidelity, "is the same which your great ancestor placed upon the brows of Malcolm Canmore at the memorable coronation of Scone."

"Bless my soul, you don't say so! I really must make a point of seeing it. I would rather have asked you to take me through the prisons and the poorhouse, as being more in my line; but since you say that these things are worth looking at, we'll go there at once. I trust you will dine with us to-day; and I shall have the pleasure of introducing you to Miss Macduff Hawkins."

It soon became evident to me that Hawkins was in that peculiar position which the Free-Trade papers persist in attributing to agriculture—viz., a state of transition. He was still under the influence of his old habits and notions, which inclined him to attach no importance whatever to birth, rank, or indeed anything beyond the possession of actual wealth, and to treat with ridicule all associations connected with the glory of bygone ages. At the same time, the discovery that he was a Macduff, and the knowledge that he was a Highland proprietor, and perhaps a chief, began insensibly to affect his views, and to give his mind a contrary bias. How was it possible for any man, with the blood of Macduff in his veins, "the real genuine article, and no mistake," as Mr Hawkins confidentially re-

marked, not to glory in the fame of his ancestor? I verily believe that if any one had asked him at that time for a subscription towards repairing Shakespeare's house at Stratford, he would willingly have loosened his purse-strings, in gratitude to the author of "Macbeth." We all know how rapidly individual feelings are generalised, how tolerant we become to others, in respect of weaknesses which beset ourselves. It is therefore no wonder if Mr Macduff Hawkins was already on the highway to becoming an aristocrat.

For my part, I had no intention whatever of standing between him and reformation. I prefer a feudal baron to a modern millocrat, and I don't care who knows it. Not that Mercurius Trismegistus himself could have made a decent baron out of Hawkins, unless he had boiled him down altogether, like Æson or Lord Soulis, but it is always something to excite a tendency; and surely it is infinitely better for a fifteen-stone manufacturer, with no end of credit at his banker's, to cultivate a decent respect for antiquity, than to countenance doctrines which, if practically applied, would inevitably lead, at some time or other, to his forcible elevation to a lamp-post. I therefore considered it my bounden duty, as a Christian and a philanthropist, to elevate the notions of Mr Hawkins, which I did through the agreeable medium of most unhomœopathic doses of homage to the glories of Macduff. In my hands

that venerable stem sent forth buds, and leaves, and flowers, with a rapidity and luxuriance which might have excited the envy of a Hindoo conjuror, when attempting to rear an extempore mango-tree; and I trust that Messrs Meyer and Mortimer have a grateful remembrance of the magnificent order for Macduff tartan which I was the means of procuring. A slight tinge of native modesty made Mr Hawkins hesitate in his choice between the trews and the kilt; but the sight of a magnificent sporran, silver-mounted, with immense cairngorms, decided the question in favour of the primitive garb, which is presumed to have been the favourite of Gaul. I next inquired into the state of his preparation for the moors, which I found unsatisfactory in the extreme; in fact, Hawkins's sporting experiences had been limited to a single day's shooting in a rabbit-warren, and he had no idea whatever of any other kind of field exercise. Of course, I put him into the hands of Dickson, who, with his usual promptitude, supplied him with first-rate artillery; and through the mediation of the same excellent individual, Mr Hawkins became the possessor of three undeniable pointers. An invitation to Ross-shire followed as a matter of course; indeed, by this time, Hawkins evidently regarded me, notwithstanding the disparity of our ages, as a kind of Caledonian Mentor, without whose advice and assistance he would inevitably be precipitated into

a sea of troubles; and I had not the heart to decline his offer.

The dinner went off very well. The two philosophers who were my fellow-guests said little, but ate a great deal; their taciturnity being possibly attributable to the fact that they were not extremely conversant with any other languages than their own, which, being respectively the dialects of Finland and Bessarabia, were not quite so intelligible to us as Mr Dickens's 'Household Words.' Lucy Hawkins I liked extremely. Her cerulean tinge was of a kind which would easily wear off after marriage, especially if she had the good fortune to be united to a man like Stanley; and even as it was, I cannot say that I found her conversation at all disagreeable. In botany, indeed, she bothered me a little, by designating certain vegetable productions by those names which one finds elaborately inscribed on slips of zinc in conservatories; but two can play at that game; and I flatter myself that the Homeric heroes figured as much to their advantage in my discourse upon the Linnæan system, as they ever did when rushing about in chariots on the plain of the Troad. I said little or nothing about Larkins, considering it wise in the meantime to preserve the appearance of total ignorance as to that transaction; but I came out strong upon the Highlands, quoted at least one-half of the 'Lady of the Lake,' and told as many original anecdotes about

Rob Roy as would have made the fortune of a Sennachie. We parted great friends.

I looked in on my way home upon Stanley, and to my surprise, found him in close confabulation with a couple of Celtic chairmen, whom I had known from my youth upwards. They were excellent specimens of that invaluable class of men, whose services may be procured at a reasonable rate in every case of emergency, and who will, at a pinch, permit railway shares to be transferred in their names as readily as they would shoulder a portmanteau. The pair whom I now beheld were leading characters in their line. One of them had been known to enact the Dugald Creature, when the usual representative of that character was suffering from a nervous affection; and the other had for several years carried off the principal prizes at the Northern Meeting, for his unparalleled displays of agility in dancing over a couple of claymores.

"Now, my lads—I hope you perfectly understand me?" said Stanley, as I entered.

"A' richt, your honour," replied the Dugald Creature, with a leer of extreme intelligence. "We'se do your bidding weel. I'll see to the dirks and sporrans, and Sandie will look after the rest."

"Dirks and sporrans!" said I, when the Gaels had departed after the usual propitiatory caulker. "Why, my dear Stanley, are you going to get up Rob Roy on your own account?"

"Something like it, I confess, as you may afterwards have reason to acknowledge. But tell me—how did you get on with Hawkins?"

"Nothing could be better. I have just left him, and on Wednesday we start for the north."

"On Wednesday! Then I have no time to lose. And Lucy—what do you think of her?"

"The most fascinating creature I ever saw!"

"I say, Cameron—I hope you will recollect you are on honour with me. No flirtation, if you please, in that quarter."

"You may consider yourself perfectly safe: I am more than half engaged already. Besides, what chance could I have against a dashing captain of dragoons?"

"That's true," remarked Stanley.

It may appear rather odd, but if anything could have tempted me to enter the lists of love against this son of Mars, it would have been the entirely acquiescent tone in which he confirmed my last suggestion. However, I dismissed the impulse.

"You must prepare yourself to find old Hawkins an altered man," said I. "He is already wild about the clans, and as patriarchal in his notions as the venerable Parr. I shall not be in the least surprised if, before the year is out, he should be put upon his trial for an attempt to subvert the House of Hanover."

"What!—does he take to it so readily?"

"I wish you heard him on the subject of Philiphaugh!" said I. "He woke this morning in blissful unconsciousness of the existence of any such locality, but I left him about an hour ago, raging at the Covenanters like a wild boar. Bless your heart—before he's a week older, he'll believe in the authenticity of Ossian!"

"First-rate! I only hope he may not descend too soon to realities."

"Keep your mind quite easy. He knows no more about the Highlands than did George IV. He has some vague notions touching tartans, and gatherings, and pibrochs; nothing more. At the same time, I don't think he would be at all astonished if, some fine morning, the M'Intoshes and M'Tavishes were to take a fancy for holding a pitched battle on his estate."

"Faith, he might find himself in an awkward fix could such a circumstance really occur!"

"Not a whit of it! He has implicit confidence in the privileges of the clan Macduff."

"The deuce he has! Really, Cameron, you have a great deal to answer for."

"My conscience is quite easy on that score—I am only obeying orders. And that reminds me that if you have anything further to say, or any instructions to give, you had better be quick about it. In three days from the present time, his foot will be on his native heath, and his name will be Macduff!"

"Well, I don't know that I have anything further of importance to communicate. You know the leading features of our plan. We reserve actual operations until we meet upon the Macduff territory. However, if you should chance on your way thither to fall in with any singular specimens of the Gael whose countenances may seem to resemble those of the two respectable individuals who have just left this apartment, you need not give way to any bursts of ecstatic surprise. I believe there is usually an emigration of the chairmen to the northwards about this season of the year."

"I understand. Then I may expect the apparition of Dugald or his friend Sandie to cross our path."

"I look upon such a phenomenon as far from improbable," replied the Captain. "And now, if you please, let us drink success to the conspiracy."

Two days afterwards, the Hawkins family and I were in Glasgow. I had anticipated a relapse on the part of the worthy Thane as he approached this busy mart of industry, and was not quite easy in my mind as to the effect which the stupendous spectacle of the St Rollox stalk might have in dispelling his dreams of feudalism. I remembered the history of the French emigrant baron, who, when restored to his paternal estates, could find no peace of mind unless he occupied himself several hours each day in the pungent task of twisting tobacco,

the occupation which had cheered his exile; and I half expected that Mr Hawkins would inhale from the thick atmosphere of the western metropolis certain atomic particles of his old inspiration. For once I was entirely wrong. On the shrine of St Rollox he offered no incense, neither did he condescend to honour a single manufactory by a visit. He expressed, however, a wish to inspect the venerable cathedral of St Mungo; and Lucy, who was then romantically disposed, would have had no objection to a stroll through the dreary shrubs of the Necropolis; but as the hour was late, I gave my vote against archæology and sentiment, and my friends acquiesced in the decision.

Of our voyage next day I need say nothing. Every one who has sailed down the Clyde knows the magnificent scenery which renders this, perhaps, the finest estuary of Britain; and old Hawkins began to distend his nostrils, and assume an aspect of savage pride, as, below Dumbarton, he caught the first glimpse of the Highland mountains, which rise up to meet the clouds from the beautiful shores of Loch Lomond. Then came Rothesay with its lovely bay, Loch Riddan, and the Kyles of Bute; and towards mid-day we were gliding along the Crinan Canal, which traverses the isthmus dividing Loch Fyne from the western seas. Again we got on board the steamer, and ploughed our way along the verge of Corryvreckan

(at that time peculiarly spiritless, as the weather was very calm), and so on, through the channels and sounds of the Hebrides—a route which should be followed by every tourist who has really a mind to explore the most sublime and least hackneyed portions of the Highland scenery. The steamer was, of course, tolerably well filled with sportsmen, drovers, and scenery-hunters—the latter of all nations, from the inquisitive Yankee to the phlegmatic German; and, altogether, the voyage was far from disagreeable. We dropped most of our travelling companions at the ports where the vessel touched, and on the second morning (rather a drizzly and uncomfortable one, by the way) the steam was let off opposite Portnacreesh, which was the appointed haven of our destiny. A bull-headed boat, pitching awfully in the swell, and manned by two unintelligible natives, came alongside, and into this Mr and Miss Hawkins, along with myself, the pointers, luggage, and Hawkins's *valet-de-chambre*, an elderly and comatose individual, who answered to the name of Cager, were lowered, fortunately with less than the usual complement of accidents. The steam was shut off, the boatmen resumed their oars, and, after receiving a thorough aspersion from the waves, against which the boat persisted in bumping in the most obstinate manner, we were all transferred to the slippery heap of rocks, overgrown with tangle and studded with limpets, which

constitutes the jetty of Portnacreesh. I managed to convey Lucy in safety over this treacherous path, which resembled a submarine causeway heaved up by the effect of an earthquake; but Hawkins, who was taking a somewhat premature topographical survey, instead of looking to his feet, chanced to tread upon one of those masses of maritime jelly which the philosophers designate *Medusæ*, and in consequence performed the antique custom of saluting the new-found shore. I presume he accepted the omen, though at the expense of his kerseymeres, which were split across at either knee.

Scarcely had he recovered from this accident, when the voice of Cager, who had been left in charge of the luggage, was heard entreating for assistance. I hurried back, and found him in deep debate with the Gael, who peremptorily refused to allow a single portmanteau to be lifted ashore until their demands, amounting to "a kinua," were satisfied. Although a conscientious appraiser would scarcely have valued the fee-simple of their boat at the money, it did not appear to me, judging from the rarity of the traffic at Portnacreesh, that they were demanding much more than double their proper fare; so, after a protracted wrangle, I compromised matters by the surrender of four half-crowns, and left Cager to follow us to the inn—which, with two fishers' cottages, constitutes the whole of the Clachan—at his leisure.

CHAPTER III

The landlord of the inn at Portnacreesh may be a very agreeable fellow, but I never saw him; and I doubt much whether any person else was ever admitted to an interview. The superintending genius of the place was a small smoke-dried woman, who uttered her few Saxon vocables with a shrill scream; and under her orders was a biped with bleached hair, from the length of whose petticoat it was to be presumed that she appertained to the gentler sex. Out of doors there wandered an individual who might possibly, upon occasion, be intrusted with the custody of a shelty, but at present his mind seemed to be occupied with only one idea; for, in answer to the inquiries made by Mr Hawkins and myself as to the possibility of our procuring a vehicle to continue our route, only one response was vouchsafed—"A penny to puy tobacco!"

"Well!" said Mr Hawkins, "I must confess that this is not a very agreeable introduction to the land of the Gael. Sublime scenery, no doubt; only I wish it would not rain so, and that one could get a glimpse of the mountains! I want breakfast too, and I wish to know how we are to get it."

To say the truth, the same idea was painfully preying on my vitals. From the appearance of

the place, and the total absence of any vestiges of poultry, I concluded in my own mind that oat-cakes and whiskey were the only probable refreshments at hand; and a conference with Mrs M'Ivor, the landlady, settled all doubts on the subject.

"Three muckle brutes o' Sassenachs had eaten them out o' house and hame yesterday. Naething less wad serve them than the end of a braw mutton-ham, and that they had pykit to the bane. They gaed aff this morning afore the steamer cam, and took the hail o' the bannocks wi' them!"

"But, my good woman, we positively must have something to eat."

"Weel! I'm no forbidding ye, but whare am I to find it? There's no a herring in the loch, and a' the lads are casting peats."

"But, my dear lady," interposed Mr Hawkins, in a conciliatory tone, rather interrupted by a cough engendered by the eddies of smoke which somehow or other would not ascend the chimney, "don't you think you could get us a nice mutton-chop, or something of the sort? I assure you we are not at all particular."

"Muttin?" vociferated Mrs M'Ivor, "and whare am I to get muttin? There's nane nearer than Oban that hasna the wool on't. Gin ye wanted muttin, ye suld hae bided at Glasco."

"Good heavens! Mr Cameron," said Hawkins, "what is to become of us? I thought this was a

country chokeful of grouse, venison, and salmon, not to mention snipes and other wild-fowls, and it appears absolutely inevitable that we are to perish of hunger!"

I was fortunately relieved from the necessity of entering my protest against the recognition of Portnacreesh as the proper sample of Highland hospitality and comfort, by the appearance of Mr Cager, who, in the extremity of his famine, had been prowling through the out-houses, and had discovered a jaunting-car, strong enough, as he averred, to carry us to our journey's end, provided a pony was attainable. Moreover, the said Cager had descried, under the body of the vehicle, a brood of well-grown ducklings, two of which he had incontinently seized, nowithstanding the frantic struggles of their foster-mother the hen, and he now exhibited their bodies as lawful spoil. Mrs M'Ivor was at first inclined to cry the coronach over her perished pouts, but yielding ultimately to the force of circumstances, and Mr Hawkins's liberal offers of reimbursement, she carried them off to the brander. Cager then assured us that the house was not quite so unfrequented as we supposed, seeing that a Highland gentleman, with a very odd name, which he could not venture to repeat, was at that moment refreshing himself in an upper chamber; at least so he conjectured, from the circumstance that three several pewter measures

had been carried up-stairs by the Hebe since our arrival.

Mr Hawkins immediately proposed that we should wait upon this mysterious gentleman; and, as the case was one of urgency, I agreed. Ascending the stair, we knocked at an unpainted door, and received a guttural permission to enter. At a deal table, garnished with a glass and sundry noggins, sate a brawny Celt, arrayed from head to foot in a suit of resplendent tartans, the colour of which matched perfectly with the fiery tinge of his hair. Though alone, he had stuck his dirk into the table, seemingly as a precaution against any disagreement with himself; and as we entered, he saluted us very courteously.

"Coot morning to you, sirs! You will have come by the steamer, I suppose? Will you take a little bitters?"

Mr Hawkins declined the proffered hospitality.

"I ask your pardon, sir, for this intrusion; but the fact is, that being a proprietor in this neighbourhood, though till now quite a stranger to it, I am anxious to procure some further information regarding the means of conveyance than the good folks here seem able to give us."

"A proprietor!" said our new acquaintance; "that is fery pleasant. I am a proprietor myself, in a small way, and it gives me the greatest satisfaction to meet with you in this agreeable manner

You will not be Sir Lauchlan M'Tavish, or Dalfosaig, come down for the crouse?"

"By no means, sir. My name is Hawkins—Macduff Hawkins of Arnaboll, at your service."

"Arnaboll!" shouted the Celt, "are ye Arnaboll? Give me your hand. As I live by pread, sir, I am proud to see your father's son among us; and I can tell you what it is, that I am not distantly related to yourself. My creat-crandmother was a Macduff of the Dallnaglattan, and I am not fery far wrong if I think that you reckon kindred with their honourable house. You must take a little bitters!"

"Indeed, my dear sir, you must excuse me—I have not yet breakfasted! The people here are rather dilatory."

"Not preakfasted!" cried the kinsman of the Macduff; "I will put that to rights, or my name is not Angus M'Craw of Dalnavardoch! Do you hear, you Mistress M'Ivor? You will bring up the salmons and the eggs, and the roe-deer pie, and all you have in the house, in two snaps of your fingers, or I will be down upon you some of these nights in a manner that will not be relished."

A sudden shuffling below, and a jingling of crockery, intimated that the threat of the M'Craw was heard and not unheeded.

"Really, Mr M'Craw," said Hawkins, "I am quite ashamed——"

"You will forkive me, Arnaboll," said the other,

"but it is not usual to call gentlemens Mr; I answer to the name of M'Craw, or Dalnavardoch; but I do not like to be spoken to as you would speak to a pagman, or a person who makes cottons."

"I am sure I ask your pardon a thousand times, M'Roe," replied Hawkins, rather abashed. "You must recollect I am a stranger here. Perhaps you would allow me to introduce my daughter."

"I have not been prute enough to be sitting here, and a leddy down pelow!" cried Dalnavardoch; "I will go to her myself directly, and perform my excuses."

"Oh, pray don't," said Hawkins, perhaps a little apprehensive of the effect which the sudden apparition of the Gael might have upon the nerves of Lucy. "I shall fetch her myself." And so saying, he disappeared.

A hideous grin distorted the countenance of Dalnavardoch, as he winked to me over his pewter. I knew the fellow at once. It was the Dugald Creature in a new phase of existence.

"Perhaps, Mr Angus M'Craw of Dalnavardoch," said I, "you will be kind enough to enlighten me as to the next stage of your proceedings? At present, I must say, I am rather in the dark."

"I've to tak' the auld man to Arnaboll," replied M'Craw, descending to a more colloquial dialect, "but I maunna make it ower easy. I ken naething mair. The Captain's ower yonder;" and he pointed per-

spicuously over his shoulder, leaving me to form my own conclusions as to the actual distance.

Further communication was rendered impossible by the entrance of Hawkins and Lucy, towards whom M'Craw of Dalnavardoch demeaned himself with the courtesy of a Paladin. Mrs M'Ivor did her best to redeem her character by the production, from some hidden nooks, of the materials for an excellent breakfast, to which, I need hardly say, we all did ample justice. The conversation then turned upon the route to Arnaboll, from which place, it appeared, we were only twenty miles distant.

"You will have gotten your pass, of course, Arnaboll," said Dalnavardoch. "It may not be needful to make exhibition of it; but I would have it not far from hand as you go up the glen of Kilnathurl."

"My pass? Dear me! I don't understand," said Hawkins. "I was not aware that Government issued anything of the sort in Scotland."

"I was not confersing of Government," said M'Craw, "regarding the measures of which I fenture no opinion, except as relating to small stills, which is a griefous oppression. I meaned the pass which you must have gotten with you from Ian Dhu of Achufufurigal."

"Doo of Ackuforgle!" cried Hawkins, in amaze; "pray explain yourself, my dear sir! Who and what is this gentleman?"

"Are ye serious, Arnaboll?" said the other, with a look of inimitable gravity. "Have you really come into this country without the leave of Black John of Achufufurigal? Ye are a bold man, sir, and a fenturesome, and I honour ye for it; but it's no every one of us that dare do the like, even though he could count on fifty clansmen at the lift of the Fiery Cross."

"But I assure you, on my honour, Mr M'Roe—I beg pardon, Dalnaverack—that I never heard of this person before in my life. Is he a magistrate?"

"Magistrate!" echoed M'Craw, in a tone of deep solemnity. "There's no a justice in the land, nor a shirra' neither, that daur make or mell with Ian Dhu. Have ye never heard tell of the murder of Kilspindie's baillie?"

"Good gracious!" cried Lucy, looking very frightened; "what does all this mean?"

"Compose yourself, my dear Miss Hawkins," said I. "This is a strange country, and you must expect to hear of strange things. I must beg, Dalnavardoch, that you will explain yourself more distinctly."

"Indeed, I wish you would," said Hawkins. "Somehow or other, I don't feel quite easy in my mind about this personage. Where does he reside?"

"Ye may as weel ask me to show the caferns of the east wind," answered M'Craw, with a touch of national poetry. "Nane kens where Ian Dhu bides.

On the bent, or on the heather—in the wood or by the linn—men find him when they seek him not, and maist would as soon forgather with the Lamh-dearg of Rothiemurchus!"

"In short," said I, "I suppose you mean to insinuate that this person is an outlaw?"

"Ye have said it, young man!" replied M'Craw.

"Bless me! this is very perplexing—very annoying, indeed," said Mr Hawkins. "Surely the magistrates are greatly to blame in allowing such persons to remain at large. In England we should have them up under the Vagrant Act immediately. But, after all, what ground of apprehension can there be from a single disorderly character?"

"Count the cattle on yonder hill," said M'Craw, pointing through the window to a mass of vapour opposite; "and when you have done that, add twenty to the number, and ye may form some judgment of the following of Ian Dhu. Last year, when he harried the lands of Craigandrouthie, they tried to count the footmarks pehind him, and it was as if a herd of deer had been driven by the *timchioll!*"

"And will this person—this Mr Doo, as you call him—venture to interfere with us on the Queen's highway?"

"Not if ye pay him black-mail," replied Dalnavardoch. "Come, come, Arnaboll, and you, my bonny leddy, you must not be frightened. A reasonable man is Ian Dhu, if you treat him reason-

ably; and indeed it is not to be expected that you should ken all that is done in this wild country of ours. But as ye have no pass, I must efen go with you as far as Arnaboll. Ian Dhu would like ill to make a feud with me; for cateran as he is, he has a kind heart, and he kens brawly that he was never steered in the woods of Dalnavardoch."

"But don't you think," said Lucy to her father, "that if any real danger is to be apprehended, we ought to apply for a military escort? Such things are constantly done in the Apennines."

"There's none of the redcoats nearer than the garrison at Fort Albert," remarked M'Craw, "and that's ten miles on the other side of Arnaboll. I heard yestreen that there is a new officer come there, with orders to take Ian Dhu; but he'll be a cleferer man than I reckon him, if he manages to lay salt on his tail."

"It is a great comfort, however, to know that we can have assistance in case of need," said Mr Hawkins. "Pray, do you happen to remember the name of the commanding officer? So soon as we reach Arnaboll, I shall write to him with my compliments."

"I ken him not," replied M'Craw of Dalnavardoch. "Southland names tarry on my memory like whey on an empty stamach. But he's a tall man, with a hawk's eye, and his name begins with an S."

"Ah, well! I daresay there will be no difficulty in finding him," said Hawkins. "I must own that Cobden has written a great deal of nonsense about the army, which seems to me a most valuable institution, especially in these remote districts. Don't you agree with me, Lucy?"

"Entirely, papa."

"Well, then," continued Mr Hawkins, "I shall feel most deeply obliged by your giving us your valuable escort to Arnaboll, M'Roc. I cannot express to you the pleasure which I feel at having made your acquaintance, and I trust that your arrangements at home will admit of your remaining with us for several days."

M'Craw heaved a sigh.

"Mine's but a cauld hearthstane at Dalnavardoch," he said. "Fire and feud have done their wark. But it's ill speaking of thae things; so I'll even step down, and see about the car, and a cart for the pockmantles, and we'll take *doch-an-dorruis* and pe coing, for I'd like to clear the glen of Kilnathurl pefore nightfall."

"Remarkably intelligent person that," said Mr Hawkins, as M'Craw retreated. "Quite a mine of information, I declare. Really I do not know how we should have managed without him."

"And so interesting, papa," remarked Lucy. "Do you know, I thought I saw a tear in his eye as he mentioned his desolate hearthstone."

I could stand this no longer; so I withdrew, under the pretext of looking after the pointers.

"May I be allowed to inquire, Mr M'Craw," said I, "if you are really going to Arnaboll?"

"Of course I am, Mr Cameron. Hasn't the laird asked me, and wud it be for me to disappoint him?"

"Very well," said I. "Of course it is no business of mine. I presume also you intend to turn out on the Twelfth?"

"Even sae, weather permitting" replied the Celt.

"You rascal! if you dare to fire a shot, I'll have you up for poaching."

"I'm leecensed," said M'Craw, coolly, "as gamekeeper, in terms of the Act. But ye need not be feared for me, Mr Cameron. I ken my part; and if Sandie kens his as weel, there will be a braw wedding afore long; and you'll find me in October at the auld stance."

"Well, I suppose you must have your own way. But tell me, what is the establishment at Arnaboll?"

"Twa English servant lasses, that are just clean daft about the kilt; Jamie Welsh, the gamekeeper, frae Ettrick, that Captain Stanley kens o'; and a lad that's no' over-wise."

"And where may your friend Sandie be at this moment?"

"Waiting in Kilnathurl, with a bottle of whiskey by him, till he hears the gig wheels."

"Now, Dugald," said I, "I don't know what your orders may be, but I warn you of this, that if you or Mr Sandie do anything that may seriously alarm Miss Hawkins, I shall feel no scruple in dealing with you as if you were a couple of foot-pads."

"Nae fears, nae fears!" said Dugald. "There will be naething done worth speaking o' till the Captain comes himsel'."

Comforted with this assurance, I exerted myself to expedite the preparations, and in a short time we were ready to set forth. Lucy, Mr Hawkins, and Cager were disposed of in the car, and I had the honour of performing the journey on foot by the side of Mr Angus M'Craw of Dalnavardoch. That truly gifted individual beguiled the tedium of our way by pouring forth a stock of information of the most original and miscellaneous kind. At first he principally dwelt upon the daring deeds and lawless achievements of Ian Dhu, whom he represented as a sort of Highland Esau, ready at all times to do battle against odds, however overwhelming. I cannot take upon me to state exactly the number of excisemen, soldiers, and messengers' concurrents who had perished by the hands of him of Achufufu-rigal, but it was something quite enough to make a considerable difference on the census. Also he had captured or surprised castles, carried off brides from weddings, harried straths, and committed divers

other delinquencies too numerous to mention; so that the fear of him, according to M'Craw, was as generally disseminated over the country as was the potato disease. Passing from this topic, he then regaled us with a lecture upon agriculture, to which Mr Hawkins, who had various schemes for improvement in his head, did seriously incline. Turnips, in M'Craw's opinion, could never be made a profitable crop, owing to the innumerable herds of deer which came down on the moonlight nights to devour them; but he asserted that tobacco of the very finest quality and flavour might be grown at a vast profit, without the Government hearing anything about it. He was likewise in favour of the erection of sundry distilleries, which, by creating a demand for barley, might give a vast impulse to the cultivation of the soil; but he deprecated the notion of the establishment of cotton manufactories, principally on the ground of the exceedingly limited nature of the local demand for shirtings.

Conversing on these and similar topics, we reached the bottom of the pass of Kilnathurl, a spot peculiarly well suited by nature for the purposes of surprise or ambuscade. The valley here narrowed itself into a glen, down which ran a brawling brook, sweeping round the base of enormous mountain masses, which appeared by some convulsion of nature to have been hurled down from the steep precipices, but were now feathered with a copse of

oak, hazel, and birch to their very summits. As I anticipated, a shrill whistle rang above from one of these natural fortalices, and a Highlander, bearded like a goat, appeared upon a ledge of rock. M'Craw had not performed the Dugald Creature in vain: he remembered the effect produced by the apparition of Helen M'Gregor.

"Who and what are ye that travel through my country?" asked the cateran, in a husky tone.

"Has the mist settled on the eyes of Ian Dhu, that he knows not Angus M'Craw of Dalnavardoch?"

"Welcome as the rain of summer to the parched earth is the voice of Angus of Dalnavardoch to the ears of Ian Dhu! But who are those with him? Are they children of the Gael?"

"The blood of the Macduff flows in the veins of the chief of Arnaboll," replied M'Craw, indicating Hawkins, whose blood was at that moment certainly not visible on the surface of his cheeks.

"Arnaboll!" repeated the outlaw, gloomily. "Was it not by the hands of one of that race that my foster-father died? Who was it that at Stirling Bridge gave the body of Red Evan to the crows, when the black eddies of the Forth boiled below, and the lightning leaped on Benlomond? Was it not a Macduff that made wastery of——" Here the feelings of the outlaw appeared to overcome his speech, or at all events his memory; for, after an

abortive effort to continue the wrongs of his deceased relative in the same figurative strain, he scratched the back of his head, and wound up his oration as follows: "And I'll tell you what it is, Angus M'Craw; I would not feel at all easy in my own mind, if I was to allow the indifidual you mention to pass by without making some further inquisition!"

"The dark shadow is upon him!" said Angus M'Craw, hastily—"that is, he is efidently out of spirits. It will be best if I go and talk with him myself;" and so saying, he plunged into the copsewood.

"Don't you think, my dear sir," said Mr Hawkins, drawing forth his pocket-book with a shaking hand, "that we could compromise this matter? I do not understand what the gentleman meant by referring to that shocking occurrence at Stirling, with which I had no connection whatever; but if it really is the custom to pay him for permission to pass along the road, pray let it be explained to him that it is my wish to settle everything in the most handsome and amicable manner."

"Hush! my dear Mr Hawkins," said I; "pray put up your pocket-book. We do not know how many eyes may be watching us from these heights, and it is never wise to throw temptation unnecessarily in the way of people. Mr M'Craw will, no doubt, effect the best negotiation in his power."

"You do not think," said Mr Hawkins, "that they will attempt to carry us up into the mountains, or anything of that sort? Surely they will not venture upon any such atrocity!"

"I am certain they will not, Mr Hawkins. They dare not commit such a violation of the privileges of the clan Macduff. The worst they can do is to detain one of us—probably Mr Cager—as a hostage."

"If they do, I'm a dead man!" cried Cager, his teeth chattering with terror. "I'd sooner be twelve months in Bolton gaol than a week with those Highland savages who wear no breeches, and carry knives in their belts. Pray don't let them make a ostridge of me, sir, else I shall inevitably give up the ghost!"

"Hush, Mr Cager," said I, "you must learn, if necessary, to suffer for your master. But here comes Dalnavardoch. Well, what news?"

"Off as hard as ye can!" cried the M'Craw. "Ian Dhu is in a fit—that is, he is fery far from well with the second sight, and in a state of visions, which may leave us time to get to Arnaboll pefore he awakens. He is fery much incensed at you, Arnaboll, and it is better to get out of the way while the dwam is upon him!"

As a matter of course, no further exhortation was required. Cager, who acted as charioteer, plied his whip with a diligence which gave unwonted stim-

ulus to the activity of the pony, and in a very short time we cleared the pass of Kilnathurl, and looked down from a rising ground upon the present possessions of the Macduff.

The house of Arnaboll, an old fortalice in only tolerable repair, was pleasantly situated upon a peninsula which ran into a large fresh-water lake, and the garden below it was carried down quite to the edge of the water. The loch itself was beautifully fringed with copsewood, above which rose a range of purple hills, broken here and there by green corries—as likely ground for game as ever blest the eye of a sportsman. There was not much demonstration of joy at our arrival. We drove rapidly and recklessly down a steep incline, made a short turn into the pleasure-ground, the entrance to which was marked by two shattered posts unconscious of a gate; and, after whisking through a wilderness of bushes, which almost concealed the path, we pulled up at an oaken door studded with enormous nails. Bell, of course, there was none; but the furious assaults of Cager on the door were in time answered by a loud barking within, and, in a little while, a gentleman in velveteen, who announced himself as James Welsh, the gamekeeper, appeared to receive us. Disappointed as Mr Hawkins must have been at the paucity of homage vouchsafed him on his first entry into his domain, he was yet too delighted at reaching any

haven of safety to indulge in premature strictures. His first impulse, after getting the baggage fairly into the house, was to examine the state of the bolts, and his second to desire a messenger to be ready to start, by the grey of the morning, for Fort-Albert.

CHAPTER IV.

"It is my opinion, Arnaboll," said the M'Craw, as we sate next morning at breakfast, "that it will not be confenient for your credit to have in the red-coats. It is a kind of affront upon the country-side; and Ian Dhu will not take it well at your hands."

"You surprise me, M'Roe," said Mr Macduff Hawkins, who by this time had greatly recovered from his terror. "Do you think that after what took place yesterday it would be proper for me to have any consideration for the feelings of a person such as that, who, by your own account, is no better than a thief and a highwayman? Sir, I have the honour to be a magistrate, and I am determined to do my duty.

"Fery goot," said M'Craw, "you know best. But if you have any regard for your cattle, among which I have observed from the window some superior stots, you will not be in a hurry to provoke a *creachadh*."

"Sir," replied Mr Hawkins, "whatever may be

the case elsewhere, I am resolved that here at least, upon my own ground, sir, the law shall be respected. If other gentlemen have chosen to wink at similar outrages, I at least shall perform my part fearlessly, and as beseems a British subject. If the military should refuse their assistance, which I do not anticipate, I shall certainly exercise those feudal powers which are vested in me, and proceed to summon my clan to hunt down this atrocious robber. I half suspect he is lurking somewhere in the neighbourhood. I heard the sound of a bagpipe most distinctly during the night."

M'Craw took a pinch of snuff.

"Excuse me, Arnaboll," said he, "but have ye counted the clan, as ye call them? Four years back, when that weaving body, Peel, began his tricks, there were eight-and-twenty men, or thereabouts, on the estate; but ye may look long now ere ye can find a chield fit to drive a beast to market. They're a' gone to America, sir; and the Lord be wi' them, for little temptation they had to bide in a country like this, where weavers and suchlike manufacturing persons have gotten the upper hand. If Montrose himsel' were to speed the fiery cross up the Braes of Arnaboll, he wadna bring six men together; and the odds are, that three of the six wad be spies of Ian Dhu."

"You don't say so!" cried Mr Hawkins. "Why, the agent from whom I purchased the estate—a

most respectable writer to the signet—assured me that I should find a steady population upon it."

"And I said nothing to the contrary, Arnaboll," replied M'Craw. "Ye'll find the population steady as a rock when ye come to pay the poor-rates. This is a grand age of reform. They drive away the strong men who were the tillers of the soil, and the farmers who paid the rents, and leave the lamiters, and the bauldies, and the bedrid, to the lairds, who must find them in meat and drink, whether they get a plack from their properties or no. It's a beautiful system, and will have a braw end! Mark my words, Laird of Arnaboll! In twenty years there will either be not a single man of auld and honourable lineage in Scotland, or the Sassenach will hear tell of another Repeal more dangerous than that of the Eireannach."

"It appears to me, however, M'Roe, that if what you say be correct, there is the more reason for having the assistance of the military."

"It's a weak hand that canna stand up for its ain!" replied he of Dalnavardoch. "We are five able-bodied men in the house, besides the piper; and, with the help of the stone walls, which are of the thickest, we are enough to keep Arnaboll against any comers."

"Good gracious, Mr M'Crow!" said Lucy, "you don't anticipate a siege?"

"I have seen ower mony strange things in my

day, my leddy, to be surprised at anything," said M'Craw. "But Ian Dhu, bating his faults, is a gentleman; and if he intends an *iomdruideadh*— that is, what you call an investment — we shall doubtless receive due intimation thereof."

"I shall certainly have no communication with this person Doo, on the subject of any kind of investment," said Mr Hawkins; "and as far as regards the military, I think it right to mention, that I have sent off this morning a letter to the officer in command at Fort-Albert, informing him of our danger. Lucy, my dear, what was the name of that military gentleman whose acquaintance we had the pleasure of making at Bolton?"

Lucy coloured like a rose. "Do you mean Captain Stanley, papa?"

"Precisely. A very intelligent, agreeable young man. Singularly enough, I find that the officer at Fort-Albert is of the same name: possibly he may be a relation. At all events, I have requested the pleasure of his company here to-morrow."

"Then you will be excusing me, Arnaboll, if I take my departure this night," said M'Craw. "There's a little matter between me and the Feachdan-ruaidhe, which is not just settled — about some stills, or nonsense of the kind — and it would be fery inconvenient to be put to any trouble on that score. So I will just take my plaid about me, and step over the hills."

"My dear sir!" said Mr Hawkins, "surely you are not in earnest! I had calculated on the pleasure of your company for at least a week. Recollect, to-morrow is the Twelfth, and I hope to have the advantage of your opinion of the merits of the grouse-shooting here, which is said to be first-rate."

"Muckle obliged to ye, all the same, Arnaboll," said the Celt. "Later in the year we may forgather. In the meantime, I have my own private reasons, which are fery forcible."

To this determination Dalnavardoch adhered inflexibly. Nothing would tempt him to hazard an interview with the Saxon captain; and at length Hawkins was compelled to give up the contest, which he did the more readily, on being assured that no attempt would be made upon the house by Ian Dhu, without proper intimation — that being a point of Highland etiquette most rigorously observed even by the most abandoned of marauders. At the same time, he warned Mr Hawkins not to expose himself unnecessarily out of doors at any distance from Arnaboll, as the same exemption which was applied to his residence was by no means understood to extend to his person. With this caution, Dalnavardoch took his departure, and I accompanied him a short way on his road.

"Well, Dugald," said I, as soon as we were out of hearing, "I must confess you have managed

matters rather cleverly. I suppose we may expect to see Captain Stanley to-morrow morning."

"He'll be here the nicht," replied the spurious M'Craw; "Sandy took the letter to him by skriech of day."

"So that Ian Dhu had the honour of performing the part of messenger to his intended captor! Where did you find him?"

"He sleepit in the house. Did ye no ken that he was Arnaboll's piper? A merry nicht we had of it after ye gaed to bed."

"That accounts for the pibroch which disturbed Mr Hawkins's slumber. And pray what may be your next proceeding?"

"Ian Dhu is rather scarce of following," replied Dalnavardoch, with a grin. "I'm thinking I'll be wanted to give him a helping hand the morn."

"Not by way of fray, I trust, or any attempt at house-breaking?"

"Oo na! just a wee bit of abduction, ye ken!"

"Impossible! Captain Stanley never would sanction any such proceeding. Have a care what you do!"

"I didna say *wha* was to be lifted," replied Dugald, sedately. "Ye mind the ballad of Christie's Will—

> 'Oh mony a time, my lord! he said,
> I've stown the horse frae the sleeping loun;
> But for you I'll steal a beast as braid,
> For I'll steal Lord Durie frae Edinburgh town.'"

"Dugald! is it possible that you would venture to violate the privileges of the clan Macduff?"

"The privileges of a snuff of tobacco!" cried Dugald, contemptuously. "Set him up for a laird! If the auld body hadna been daft, I'd hae tellt him a bit o' my mind. But bide ye easy, Mr Cameron, and ye'll see some sport. And now I think ye had better gang back and keep the leddy frae wearying. If ye want sport, there's a good breeze on the loch, and the trout will be rising at the red heckle, or ye can take a pluff at the flappers among the reeds."

Finding Lucy seated on the lawn busily engaged in sketching the leading features of Arnaboll, I followed Dugald's advice; and having taken my rod with me, rowed up the lake, declining the proffered services of Jamie Welsh. I had fished for several hours with considerable success, and was just meditating on the propriety of returning, when I was hailed from the shore; and, on looking round, perceived to my delight that the new-comer was Stanley. He had observed me from the road, and, sending on his servant with the buggy to Arnaboll, had taken this short cut to learn the precise state of affairs.

I told him everything that had occurred, whereat he manifested exceeding delight.

"That fellow M'Craw, as you call him, is really a treasure. And so old Hawkins has no suspicion of any trick?"

"None in the world," said I. "He is as fully convinced of the reality of Ian Dhu of Achufufurigal as you can be of your own existence. But why in a shooting-jacket, Stanley? I expected to see you as radiant as the God of War. And how many men do you propose bringing over from Fort-Albert?"

"The whole garrison," replied Stanley. "You are aware that Fort-Albert owes its existence to the brilliant imagination of your friend M'Craw. The fact is, I have a shooting-box in the neighbourhood, not six miles off; but, without some such ruse as this, I could never have got admittance to Arnaboll. But Lucy — how does she take all this mummery?"

"To tell you the truth, Stanley, I don't think that she half believes it. Ian Dhu very nearly broke down at the pass yesterday, having pitched his style of language somewhat too high; and since then I can see she has misgivings."

"Then my first business must be to disclose the whole plot to her. She cannot possibly be angry if I appear in my own character, after having submitted to disguise myself as a philosopher at her request; as to stratagems, they are universally considered to be as fair in love as in war."

"Especially," added I, "when fathers have flinty hearts and preposterous prejudices against the army. I must, however, do Hawkins the justice to admit that he is considerably improved in that respect."

"One other act, then," said Stanley, "and the drama is over. But where shall I find Lucy? I must see her before I encounter the terrible Macduff."

"You observe that clump of lilacs near the water's-edge? I caught a glimpse of a parasol on the other side, and I think you are certain to find her there. I shall pull ashore in this bay, and leave you for half an hour to make the necessary explanations."

"No fear of interruption, eh?"

"None in the world. Hawkins is looking over plans for a piggery on a gigantic scale."

Half an hour is but a short period for an interview between lovers, so I kept out of the way until dinner-time. I could see by the faces of every one, as I entered the drawing-room, that the most perfect satisfaction prevailed. Mr Hawkins was not only civil, but particularly courteous to Stanley, who, on the other hand, comported himself with an appearance of marked respect for his host. Lucy looked positively bewitching. She had been let into the secret, and was not going to betray it.

"I take it very kind of you, Captain Stanley," said Mr Hawkins, after we were seated at table, "to have come over here so early. I must own, however, that I should have been well pleased had you brought with you some of your men, as an accession to our garrison."

"Why, you see, my dear sir," said Stanley, "we have a very limited number of men at the fort. There has been such an outcry lately for reduction, that the Government have been compelled to clip and pare as much as they can; and, of course, the smaller stations are the first to be reduced. I understand that, next year, it is proposed to withdraw the whole force from Fort-Albert."

"You don't mean to say so, Captain Stanley!" cried Hawkins, impetuously. "Why, Lord John Russell must have lost his senses. Do they intend to leave property absolutely without any protection?"

"I do not profess to understand the theory, sir," said Stanley, modestly; "but I believe Mr Cobden, and other eminent politicians, are of opinion that universal peace can be best secured by the total suppression of the army."

"I'll tell you what it is," said Hawkins, "that man Cobden has become a thorough humbug. What with his Peace Congresses, and the like, he is making himself the laughing-stock of Europe. I am sorry to say that our member, Walmsley, is almost as bad. No, no! let them meddle with what else they please, the army must be let alone!"

"I am sure, sir, the British army feel deeply obliged to you for the sentiment," said Stanley.

"They deserve it, sir — they deserve it," said Hawkins. "And so they have reduced the number

of men here, have they? That must be looked to in the next session of Parliament. All the kinder in you coming to us, Captain Stanley."

"Why, to say the truth, sir, the moment I heard you were expected in the neighbourhood, I was most anxious to pay my respects; and it is very gratifying to me to think that I can render you the slightest service. I should certainly have brought over some of my men; but the fact is, that most of them are employed just now in a service of a peculiar nature."

"What! are there more Mr Doos than one in the neighbourhood?"

"Not exactly that. We have discovered that smuggling and illicit distillation have been going on on a large scale lately; and I am sorry to say that a landed proprietor in this neighbourhood is implicated. Most of our men are out in search, and I hope he will be soon apprehended."

"What a rascal he must be!" said Hawkins. "Pray, what may be his name?"

"Mr M'Craw of Dalnavardoch."

"The Lord preserve us!" cried Cager, dropping a pile of crockery on the floor with a smash.

"Cager! are you mad, sir?" cried his master, quickly. "Take away those broken dishes, and hand round the champagne. And do you think, Captain, you will be able to apprehend this person?"

"I hope so; though he is a very cunning fellow, and has some curious hiding-places. We tracked him last to Portnacreesh, but have since lost the trace. I hardly think he can be lurking with any of his friends in this part of the country, for nobody would be mad enough to incur the risk of the penalty, if detected in giving him shelter."

"What penalty?" said Hawkins, tremulously.

"I believe it is very severe," said Stanley—"more severe, probably, than it ought to be, seeing that it attaches even to those who may give him a night's lodging without being acquainted with his guilt. A fine of three thousand pounds, and imprisonment for twelve months in the gaol of Inverness. Miss Hawkins, may I have the honour of taking wine with you?"

"And pray, Captain Stanley, are you empowered to apprehend any gentleman who may have had the misfortune to meet this person in the way you describe?"

"Such are my orders, sir," said Stanley. "But it is no use talking further of this fellow. We shall have him in custody soon enough, I warrant, as well as his accomplices; and I own it will be a great relief to me, for these expeditions through the mountains are remarkably fatiguing. By the way, Mr Hawkins, you intend, of course, to take the moors to-morrow?"

"Certainly; and I hope you will join us."

"Why, to say the truth, I brought over my gun for that purpose. Arnaboll is too famous for its grouse to be neglected."

Whether it was that a cloud rested upon the mind of Mr Hawkins, owing to the startling disclosure of the pursuits of his recent guest, or whether the thoughts of the morrow occupied us all, I cannot exactly say; but the evening did not pass away with as much hilarity as I expected. After we left the dining-room, I was doomed, for an hour at least, to be the recipient of the terrors of Arnaboll, a penance which I endured with fortitude, simply because I presumed that Stanley was advancing his cause elsewhere. That night the pibroch was not heard.

Next morning we started for the moors. As the range was extensive, it was agreed that we should divide our party, Mr Hawkins being accompanied by Welsh the gamekeeper, and Cager, who implored most earnestly to be allowed to look upon a live grouse. Stanley and I had the benefit of the services of the "lad," who justified Dugald's character of him, by proving to be an absolute idiot. We arranged to meet about two o'clock, at a spot denominated the Fairy's Well.

Stanley was a first-rate shot, and I was in tolerable practice; the dogs were steady, and the birds strong and plentiful. I presume I need say nothing more upon the subject of our exploits, which are,

indeed, beyond the scope of this history; and therefore I shall simply state that, by the time we reached the Fairy's Well, the "lad" was staggering under his burden. Stanley had not thought proper to communicate to me the nature of his further programme; nor did I care much to inquire about it, being satisfied that the *dénouement* would do credit to the skill of the accomplished artist. The Fairy's Well was situated in a beautiful little hollow among the hills, not discernible until you were close upon it; and it was only by shouting *Tobar-nan-sithean*, and making vigorous gestures expressive of eating, that I could make our guide comprehend whither he was desired to lead us. As we were the first-comers, we stretched ourselves on the heather by the side of the well, which rose in pellucid clearness beneath a rock, and then filtered itself away through a bed of emerald verdure.

"I trust nothing has befallen Mr Hawkins," said I. "Pray heaven he has not fallen in with the myrmidons of Ian Dhu!"

"Keep your mind quite easy," said Stanley. "I heard a double shot go off about ten minutes ago, and, I think, in this direction. He will be here presently, unless he has bagged a brace of caterans."

Still we waited, and no Hawkins. At last we heard a prolonged shout on the gale, which we

answered with a similar salvo, and in two or three minutes the chief of Arnaboll appeared on the summit of the brae, alone, without hat or gun, and panting as fiercely as a steam-engine. Almost before we could rise, he had rushed down to the well, and flung himself prostrate on the heather.

"Bless me, Mr Hawkins!" said I, "what is the matter? Where are the gamekeeper and Cager?"

"A drop of brandy, if you love me!" gasped Hawkins. "Oh what an infernal country!"

"Nothing wrong, I hope?" said Stanley; "nothing serious?"

"Cager—poor Cager—is gone!"

"Gone! where to?" "Not dead, I trust?" asked Stanley and I in the same breath.

"Worse! he has been carried off by that murdering miscreant, Doo of Acknafurgle!"

"This is most extraordinary!" said Stanley. "If the scoundrels had carried *you* off, sir, I could have understood their object from the value of the prize; but why they should have seized upon your servant baffles my comprehension."

"And the gamekeeper?" said I, "have they also spirited him away?"

"Give me another drop of brandy, with a little water in it, for I feel quite faint," said Mr Hawkins, "and I will tell you the whole story. You see, we had gone on shooting for some time, not very successfully, I allow; for the whirring of the birds

made me somewhat nervous, and I did not kill as usual. However, I wounded a considerable number, as Welsh can testify."

"Yes—he is an excellent keeper, and understands his business," muttered Stanley.

"Well, sirs, the day was confoundedly hot, and Cager began to lag behind. I almost suspect he was drinking, for I rather imprudently gave him the flask to carry;—but that does not matter now. However, in order to bring him on, I was obliged sometimes to call out his name, which Welsh objected to, though he could not assign any intelligible reason. We were then at a wild part of the moor,—broken into pieces, like nothing else I ever saw in my life. Welsh told me that he saw a cock-grouse sitting on the ground; but he could not make me see it; however, he desired me to aim at a tuft of heather, fire both barrels, and I would be sure to kill it. I did so, and killed the bird."

"Did you pick it up?"

"No, sir. I thought it might be wounded, and in order to make sure of it, I rushed forward without loading my gun. All at once I heard a terrible halloo, and two prodigious Highlanders—one of whom I am certain I have seen before, if not both—rose up from a hollow in the moss, and rushed upon us. What they said, I cannot distinctly specify; but they vociferated something. One of them seized upon Cager, while the other over-

powered the gamekeeper, and tied him hand and foot with his own shot-belts. What followed afterwards, I really do not know. I fled as fast as my legs could carry me; and very glad I was when I heard you answering my call."

"How long ago was it since this happened, Mr Hawkins?" asked Stanley.

"Not much above a quarter of an hour, I should think; though I certainly must have run a couple of miles."

"Then we surely are in time to intercept the villains. We are four in all, and two of us with loaded weapons. Do you think, Mr Hawkins, you could lead us to the spot?"

"If you wish to go, gentlemen, don't waste time in waiting for me. I am as useless as a ripped-up pair of bellows. I will follow you as fast as I can."

"Nay, but, Mr Hawkins," said Stanley, "your presence as a magistrate is indispensable; besides, we never should be able to find the place without you. Lean on me, my dear sir, and pray endeavour to make the exertion."

With the groan of a stranded grampus, Hawkins gathered himself upon his legs; and, availing himself of our assistance, went on. We were so much excited by the adventure, that we did not perceive that the "lad" tarried behind—an instance of sloth and indifference which, for the credit of human nature, I attribute rather to the attraction of sundry

ribs of cold roast-lamb, which were contained in his wallets, than to any abstract deficiency in animal courage.

In a short time we reached the place where the assault had been committed. It was a wild tract of broken peat-hags, capable of giving covert to a whole army — or, in wet weather, of engulfing it —as was said to be the case with the Serbonian bog, of which honourable mention is made in Milton's 'Paradise Lost.' Here, indeed, we found Welsh—not bound hand and foot, as Mr Hawkins had asserted—though his shot-belts were ingeniously twisted and buckled across his ankles—but seated upon his rump, and fostering with affectionate care the infant existence of his pipe. He did not appear to have suffered greatly either in mind or body.

His account of the transaction tallied precisely with that of Mr Hawkins. One of the ruffians, whom he described as endowed with preternatural strength, tripped up his heels, and laid him prostrate on the heather; whilst the other detained Cager, whom terror had paralysed, by the throat. Welsh being bound, they lifted the unhappy Cager on a horse; and, after making sundry demonstrations with their dirks, expressive of instant death to the gamekeeper should he attempt to follow them, or free himself from his bonds, they set off at a round gallop across the moor, and disappeared

over an adjoining hill. Such was the sum-total of Welsh's evidence.

"Can you form no idea of their object in carrying off the man?" asked Stanley.

"Weel I wat, I can do that!" replied Welsh; "it's no ill to ken what put up the dander o' the Hieland deevils."

"Explain yourself."

"Arnaboll, there, aye keepit crying out for his man—who, puir body, was sooking at the flask; and, for a' I could say, he wadna leave aff. It was aye 'Cager!' here, and 'Cager!' there; and ye ken weel eneuch what cager means to the north o' the Hieland line."

"Why, what does it mean?" cried Hawkins, in amazement.

"Just gauger—that is, exciseman. Ye cried loud eneuch to be heard three mile aff, and ye wadna stop, though I telled ye to be quiet, for I kenned there were a hantle of sma' stills up hereawa'; and I thought mair nor ance, that I got a glisk of the tartan. Weel, its my persuasion that the worm was at wark no far from this; and when the folks heard ye crying oot on the gauger, what else could they think but that ye had come up wi' a search-warrant? Nae wonder they gruppit him. I wad ha'e done the same mysel'; and it will be a mercy and a special providence if he is not by this time at the bottom of a loch!"

"Dear, dear! what shall we do?" cried Hawkins, in utter perplexity. "What can they possibly have done with the poor fellow? It is very remarkable, though, that I can see no marks of a horse's hoofs."

"Fient a trace will ye find," replied Welsh. "They aye put brogues on their beasts, as they did on the Border langsyne."

"Do you think you could recognise either of the fellows?" asked Stanley.

"I ken ane of them weel, and sae does your honour. It was Angus M'Craw of Dalnavardoch."

"M'Roe! Impossible!" said Hawkins.

"'Deed was it. I kenned him brawly afore, and I seed him at Arnaboll yestreen."

"At Arnaboll?" cried Stanley.

"Ay. He came there wi' the laird," said Welsh.

"Mr Hawkins, can it be possible that this is true?" said Stanley, gravely. "Have you actually been guilty of contravention of an express Act of Sederunt, by giving shelter to a person so notorious as this M'Craw, who has defrauded the Government to an enormous extent, and is well known as the head and director of all the illicit distillers in the county?"

"Captain Stanley," said Hawkins, looking as though he would willingly have exchanged places with Cager, "it is no use denying that this person slept for one night in my house; but I knew no

more of his character than the child unborn. We met him by the merest accident at Portnacreesh, as Mr Cameron can testify; and as he saved us from an attack on the part of the robber Doo, who met us on the road, and further claimed relationship with me, I could not, as you must see, do less than invite him to Arnaboll."

"This makes the case even more perplexing," said Stanley, gravely. "Are you not aware, Mr Hawkins, that, by an Act of the Scottish Parliament, as yet unrepealed, the clan of M'Craw, as well as that of M'Gregor, is proscribed, and that the penalties extend to those who are connected with them, however distantly, by intermarriage?"

"You don't say so?"

"It is not more than two months since, in pursuance of that Act, the house of Dalnavardoch was burned to the ground. Observe, Mr Hawkins, how the case stands. You admit having trafficked with the notorious outlaw Ian Dhu of Achufufurigal for your personal protection — a serious offence in a country where the payment of black-mail is punished as severely as its exaction. Then you are found at Portnacreesh, the well-known rendezvous of the illicit distillers, in communication with the marked head of that formidable gang, who is, moreover, a hereditary outlaw. You admit relationship with him, which brings you at once within the scope of the same penalties; and you give him

shelter, which of itself is an indictable crime. These things, or some of them, might perhaps be explained or extenuated; but it is a remarkable circumstance, that, on the very day after this occurs, Angus M'Craw should be found evidently engaged in illicit distillation upon your property—a coincidence upon which it does not become me, as an officer, to comment. Mr Hawkins, it gives me the deepest pain to find you in this predicament."

Had the earth yawned beneath the feet of the unfortunate Hawkins, I do not think he could have been more horrified than at finding himself transformed at once into an outlaw, a rebel, and a malefactor. He looked from one to other of us in sore dismay.

"It's a' true what the Captain says about the wild M'Craws," asseverated Jamie Welsh; "and oh, it is beautiful to hear the law sae preceesely expounded!"

"And what am I to do?" said the luckless chief of Arnaboll. "What is to become of me?"

"I am neither your judge, your accuser, nor your legal adviser, Mr Hawkins," said Stanley, mildly. "You cannot but be aware of the interest which I feel for you and your family; indeed, I may safely say, that I would rather my commission was forfeited than be personally instrumental in surrendering you to the severities of the law. But you must be aware I have no option."

"Will you really inform against me, Captain Stanley, and I as innocent of evil as a factory child?"

"My heart bleeds for you, Mr Hawkins, and for your lovely daughter; but the demands of duty are paramount. Welsh, you must prepare to go home with me immediately, in order that your precognition may be reduced to writing."

"Stay a moment, Captain Stanley," said I; "an idea has occurred to me. Mr Hawkins," said I, drawing him aside, "this is, no doubt, a very ugly scrape; and although everything must be satisfactorily explained at last, I presume you would not wish to run the risk of incarceration?"

"Not if ten thousand pounds would suffice to hush the matter up."

"Well, I am sure that Stanley would rather undergo any reasonable sacrifice than appear in this business. You see he has a chivalrous sense of duty, and it would be hopeless to persuade him to conceal what has taken place so long as he continues in the service; but if you could advance such reasons as might induce him to resign his commission at once——"

"Say no more, my dear friend!" cried Hawkins. "Daniel could not have counselled more wisely. Captain Stanley——" and the two drew apart in deep conference.

"Welsh," said I, "it strikes me that you and I

are rather in the way just now; so, if you have no objection, and are not afraid of encountering any more Highlanders, we shall take a beat round the hill, and see if we cannot fall in with another covey."

Jamie agreed without scruple; and after we had gone a little way, he drew my attention to a thin spiral column of smoke arising from the bank of a burn.

"The fule body they ca' Cager is there down by," said he, in a mysterious whisper; "and I wad like no that ill to be there mysel'. The speerits they make hereabout is just prime."

"And I suppose he is in very good company?" said I.

"It will be his ain fault if he's no happy. There's Dugald and Sandie, and twa mair, and they've gotten the pipes, and walth o' salted mutton; and if that disna gar him drink, I dinna ken what will. 'Od, there's war places for fun than a sma' still!"

"Then I suppose he will be forthcoming when he is wanted?"

"In twal hours after notice, at ony rate," replied Welsh. "It's just astonishing how the bees get into ane's head amang the heather."

"Very good. But there is Sweep drawing on game; let us see what it is."

When I rejoined the party, I found that Hawkins

and Stanley had come to a distinct and amicable understanding, upon terms proposed by the latter. I did not inquire into the secret ramifications of the treaty, though I could form a shrewd guess as to their nature, from the evident satisfaction which beamed on the countenance of my friend the Captain. It was now only necessary to bind over Welsh to secrecy; and as he expressed his entire readiness to take an oath, upon powder and shot, never to reveal any circumstance which might identify his master with the doings of the clan M'Craw, and, moreover, accepted a *douceur* of ten pounds by way of rivetting the bargain, we considered that matter satisfactorily arranged. As for the "lad," it was not thought requisite to take any steps to insure his silence, as we found him, on our return, fast asleep by the Fairy's Well, surrounded by a pile of bones from which every morsel of animal fibre had disappeared.

For the few remaining days that I tarried at Arnaboll, I had the shooting entirely to myself. Mr Hawkins would not venture out again; and Stanley was too much engaged in rowing Lucy about the lake, sketching cataracts, and making verses, to take any interest in field sports. I should not omit to mention that, two days after our adventure on the moor, Cager was discovered, by an exploring party headed by Welsh, fast asleep upon the heather. As there were no traces of any

human habitation in the neighbourhood, and no marks of any other footsteps except his own, the Highlanders arrived at the conclusion that he had been carried off by the Queen of Faerie, and detained for a space of time within her subterranean bowers. Much support was given in this theory by the account of Cager himself, who remembered nothing distinctly beyond being hurried into what seemed to him to be a hillock, where he was supplied with a strange but delicious liquor, by a crew of beings whom he described as peculiarly hairy. Here he saw neither the rays of the sun nor the glimmering of the moon; his food was a curious viand, such as he never tasted before; and at times a wild and ravishing music rang in his ears. At length he became unconscious, and only awoke to his senses when roused by Jamie Welsh. Possibly he might have received a contusion on his way from the lower to the upper world, for he complained several days afterwards of a racking pain in his head. It was also remarkable that, about this time, Ian Dhu of Achufufurigal and Angus M'Craw of Dalnavardoch vanished from this district of country, and the people thereof saw them no more.

In the month of October following, I was summoned to Bolton, to attend the celebration of the nuptials of my friend Stanley and Miss Lucy Hawkins. After the happy pair had driven off, and the

rest of the company retired, Mr Hawkins took me into his study.

"I wish to mention to you, Mr Cameron, a circumstance which strikes me as truly remarkable. You remember, of course, Doo of Ackuforgle, and that very mysterious personage, M'Roe?"

"I am not likely to forget them," said I.

"Well, sir, about six weeks ago, as I was coming south, I entered the station of the Caledonian Railway at Edinburgh, and who do you think I saw there acting in the capacity of porters?"

"I have not the slightest conception."

"May I never make another bargain, sir, if there were not Doo and M'Roe with my luggage upon their shoulders! I was paralysed, sir—perfectly paralysed; but before I could recover myself they had put everything into the van, the bell rang for starting, and M'Roe, putting his head into the window of the carriage where I was sitting, said in the gravest manner possible—'You'll find all right, Arnaboll, when you get to Carlisle!' Sir, I have often heard strange things of your countrymen, but this seems to me the most extraordinary adventure that was ever recounted in history."

As such, I dedicate it to the excellent class of men who are entitled to the whole merit of the Raid.

HOW TO MAKE A PEDIGREE.*

A NEW SONG.

BY THE LATE LORD NEAVES.

[*MAGA.* JUNE 1865.]

AIR—"*Nelly Gray.*"

IF you'd like a goodly tree
With a branching pedigree,
Where you'll stand forth in full ancestral fame,
Just employ an antiquary,
Who will humour your vagary,
And have everything endorsed with some great name.
If the good Bernard Burke
Will but put it in his work,
And he'll scarcely have the heart to say you nay,
What though Garter King should scowl,
And the Scottish Lyon growl?
There's no power that can take your tree away.

Chorus—Oh! good Bernard Burke,
Please to put me in your work,
Sure an Irish heart will never say me nay;
Then though Garter King may scowl,
And the Scottish Lyon growl,
Where's the power that can take my tree away?

* See an amusing and interesting little volume, the production obviously of a scientific hand, under the title of 'Popular Genealogists; or, The Art of Pedigree-making.' Edinburgh: Edmonston & Douglas, 1865.

As the Highland Bible showed,
There were Grants before the Flood,
And the Grants still believe it to a man ;
And the like proof you can bring
That the Coultharts were the thing
Ere our own Anno Domini's began.
Just delete a letter here,
And insert another there,
And interpolate what balderdash you please ;
With this Soldier and Crusader,
And that Viking and Invader,
You may soon have the best of pedigrees.

Chorus—Then if good Bernard Burke
Will but put you in his work,
And if once you're there you're pretty sure to stay,
What though Garter King should scowl,
And the Scottish Lyon growl ?
There's no power that can take your name away.

You must never care a straw
Though anachronism or flaw
Show your History and Heraldry run mad ;
Though your Peer was but a Ploughman,
And you've made a Man a Woman,
And you've charters when no charters could be had.
If authorities you're scant in,
As perhaps they're wholly wanting,
You must ne'er on that account lay down the pen ;
Quote Schiekfusius and Smiglesius,
With Rhubarbus and Magnesius,
And the Devil's self can't contradict you then.

Chorus—Then if good Bernard Burke
Will but put them in his work,

You've a very pretty chance that there they'll stay;
For in spite of Garter's scowl,
And the Scottish Lyon's growl,
There's no power that can take such stuff away.

But I'll give you here a hint,
Your ambitious views to stint;
There's a limit that a wise man will not pass:
You may safely vaunt and vapour
While it's only done on paper,
But you'd better keep from pannel and from glass.
For if there you lay a brush,
It may put you to the blush,
Should the Lyon at your scutcheon make a dash;
If your Arms, so well devised,
Are not "duly authorised,"
All your quarters may some morning get a smash.

Chorus—For though good Bernard Burke
Might still keep you in his work,
There are others that would something have to say:
Old Garter with his law,
And the Lyon with his paw,
Might then mercilessly tear your Coat away!

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